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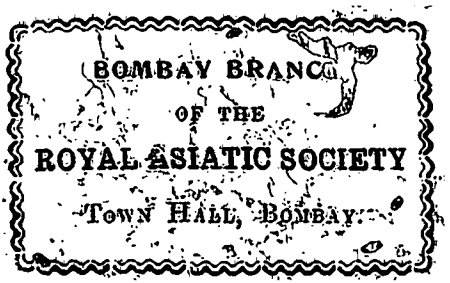

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A LIFE

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Bust of Shakespeare in Stratford Church.

W Wa - e - 6

Triumph, my Britain! Thou hast one to show,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!

LONDON:
MDCCCXLVIII.

THE LIFE

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

INCLUDING

MANY PARTICULARS RESPECTING THE POET AND HIS FAMILY

NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

BY

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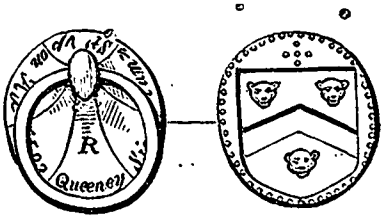

Sigillum St. super Av. 1592.

THE tide of public curiosity in matters of Shakespearian enquiry has of late years set almost exclusively in the direction of biography; the minutest facts respecting the personal history of the World's Poet receiving more attention, and creating wider discussion, than the happiest illustrations of the great works on which his reputation is established. It is not difficult to assign a reason for this preference, for, although the higher branches of criticism are undoubtedly more important, perhaps, even, when fully understood, more interesting and attractive, biographical disquisitions have the advantage of being readily appreciated by all; and, as Shakespeare was the most eminent genius the world has ever produced, it is not surprising that details of his existence, information of his reality when he lived and moved as one of ourselves, should be sought for with so much avidity. We should also recollect that minute historical researches never appear to so great advantage, nor are they productive of so much utility, as when they tend to unfold the private actions and characters of those great men whose deeds or works have exercised beneficial influences on the progress of mankind.

Authors of almost every description have attempted this for Shakespeare, each one bitterly complaining of the paucity of facts, but making ample amends by conjectures of their own; for, as the great dramatist excelled all in imagination, his biographers have exceeded all other biographers in the facility with which they have regarded him in all imaginable and imaginary positions. A small portion only of the writers of the history of Shakespeare's life lay claim to the merit of having instituted original enquiries, the majority being content with appropriating the information recorded by their predecessors, and giving us the results of their own reasonings upon them. Some, especially Malone, and more recently Mr. Collier, have exercised laudable diligence in examining records for notices likely to throw light on the poet's history; legal registers of property and suits, which arrest so many latent facts that had otherwise been lost with the perishing details of social life. These two writers, indeed, have unfolded so much valuable information, and their perseverance has been so great as almost to have become proverbial, that no astonishment may well be expressed, when we find others declining to trace sources believed to have been so minutely investigated, and lamenting the inevitable conclusion that nothing more of any importance respecting the poet was now to be discovered.

Without undervaluing in the slightest degree the distinguished and valuable researches of those two critics, or complaining of want of industry in other biographers, it is necessary to say, however strange such an assertion may appear, that the repositories of documents most obvious to any enquirer as likely to contain information relating to

Shakespeare, have never yet been properly examined for that purpose. Even the records of Stratford-on-Avon have not been used to any extent, and the few notices of the Shakespeares hitherto quoted from them, have generally been most inaccurately transcribed. Mr. Collier, in this respect, has contented himself with Malone's researches, and Mr. Knight is, I believe, the only one of late years who has referred to the originals, but the very slight notice he has taken of them, and the portentous mistakes he has committed in cases where printed copies were not to be found, would appear to show that they were unintelligible to that writer. Malone, with all his errors, possessed some knowledge of palæography,* a science essentially necessary in the investigation of contracted records of the sixteenth century, especially of those written in Latin.

In the Council Chamber of Stratford-on-Avon are preserved vast quantities of manuscript papers, commencing at a very early period, and particularly rich in materials for a history of that town during the reign of Elizabeth. All these I have carefully perused,—attractive bundles, filling large boxes, chests, drawers, and cupboards,—and the important and novel information thence collected is fully exhibited in the following pages. They are in the custody of W. O. Hunt, Esq., whose judicious care and anxiety for their preservation merit the warmest testimony. In the last century, these records were lent to Malone, who was indignant because the corporation requested their

* But not in a very profound degree, or he would scarcely have read *tentator servicii* in the extract I have given at p. 26.

restoration after they had been several years in his possession! The value of these precious treasures is now better understood, and their importance properly appreciated. They cannot, indeed, be too highly valued, or too rigidly guarded.

These Records form the chief source from which the materials for this work have been derived, but they are by no means the only collections at Stratford illustrative of the genius whose name has cast a magic halo around that town, and conferred upon it everlasting celebrity. Among the inhabitants of Stratford who have felt this the most strongly, and worthily availed themselves of local advantages in collecting and preserving genuine memorials of the poet, none have performed more commendable services than the late Captain James Saunders. Possessing ample leisure, and an able draughtsman, no material relic of the ancient town was suffered to pass away before his pencil had perpetuated it for the information of posterity, and every document that came in his way which appeared to him likely to throw light on Shakespeare or his family was immediately transcribed. The hand of death prevented the accomplishment of his objects so fully perhaps as he had intended, but his manuscript collections and sketches will ever remain testimonies of his accurate and extensive research. He has, it is true, omitted to note many entries I have considered of great importance, but this circumstance may be attributed to the imperfect and unarranged state in which some of his papers were left at his decease. On the other hand, several manuscripts, the originals of which are private property, have been copied by him with minute accuracy, and some

of the most curious woodcuts in this volume have been derived from his careful drawings of objects now in many instances destroyed by the march of modern innovation. This valuable collection has recently, with as much judgment as liberality, been presented to the Royal Shakespearian Club of Stratford, by the author's son, Henry Caulfield Saunders, Esq., and it is to be hoped that in time all authentic papers relating to Shakespeare will eventually find a place in a Museum consecrated to his memory, to be erected on his patrimonial estate, and near to the spot where he first saw the light.

The Record Offices of London have also furnished much valuable information which has escaped previous enquirers. The want of a diligent spirit of research is here again eminently exhibited. For example, Mr. Collier enters into an elaborate argument to ascertain the year in which Shakespeare purchased New Place, and expresses his opinion that the exact date can never be recovered; but it is certainly most remarkable that no biographer should have been at the pains to take the first process in an enquiry relating to the purchase of property in those days, an inspection of the *Index Finium*. The date having been brought within narrow limits, a few minutes' search would have discovered the foot of the fine levied upon that occasion. This series of records has preserved several other important particulars respecting the poet and his father never before noticed.

It will be found that, with the aid of the documents discovered in the collections above mentioned, there are very few eras in the history of Shakespeare's life on which

I have not been able to throw some new light; and, with the exception of that little mine of valuable detail, Collier's New Facts, 1835, the present volume contains, I believe, more new information than any biographical work on Shakespeare that has yet appeared. But even with these advantages, the task is one so bold and arduous, if a writer presumes to form his own opinions on subjects treated of by so many abler men, that, in the commencement of this investigation, I entertained the humbler project of publishing my discoveries separately. "When I said I would die a bachelor," says Benedick, "I did not think I should live till I were married." I had quite as little idea of becoming one of Shakespeare's biographers; but the publishers, those arbitrers of the destinies of authors, refused to accept my collections unless presented to the public in a consecutive narrative, and I was obliged to make an essay which, under other circumstances, would probably not have been attempted.

A very few words on the course at length adopted will suffice, for the materials have been arranged in the least presuming form, and no more is attempted beyond placing before the reader an unprejudiced and complete view of every known fact respecting the poet. The word *unprejudiced* need not create a smile, however impossible it might appear that impartiality could be wanting in such a matter; but latterly a spirit has arisen amongst a few writers, which would seem to tell us it is little better than sacrilege to believe any evidence affecting in the slightest degree Shakespeare's moral character. Believing this species of refinement to be unnecessary, and not exactly observing

more reason that a good poet must be a man of spotless character than that a bad one must be a villain, I have ventured to submit in every case the best evidence I could obtain, frankly grounding my opinion in every instance on testimony or reasonable probability, uninfluenced by any preconceived notion that what was not favorable was likewise not true, but certainly leaning in most instances to the more honorable interpretation, for Shakespeare's contemporaries have recorded the amiability of his character in terms that cannot be misinterpreted.

All the documents of any importance respecting the Shakespeares are here printed at length, so that the reader will be much better able to judge of their value and importance than if abstracts only were furnished. Their authenticity will also be more evidently perceived, a matter of no small importance, when it is considered how many forgeries of Shakespearian manuscripts have been attempted to be made current, though reference to none of them is made in the following pages.

It would have been no very difficult task to have impugned the accuracy of my predecessors, for here are silently corrected many hundreds of mistakes, some of the greatest magnitude, others merely literal. Indeed, the corrections have been in some instances so overwhelming, that it is scarcely possible all could have been detected. In the course of one short Latin document, there are, in all copies hitherto printed, no less than fifty-seven blunders, so that it is absolutely unreadable, and hence its exact purport has never been mentioned. The recurrence of *ad* 20. *cur.* for *ad proximam curiam*, the MS. reading *px*, which has

been taken for *æ*, is one out of many examples that might be produced of the singularly small knowledge of records that has been brought to assist in these enquiries. Literal accuracy, I admit, is not to be attained without having free use of the originals, but, in fact, ordinary care has seldom been observed in cases where the MSS. were personally consulted. In the will of Agnes Arden, as printed by Mr. Hunter, which occupies not quite two octavo pages, eighty-seven errors have been committed, but these are mostly literal, and do not affect the sense. In the case of any question of authenticity, however, such variations might cause serious inconvenience; and where the subject is susceptible of so many delicate arguments, it is generally best to follow the originals as minutely as possible, except in the refined antiquarian absurdities of retaining the *u* for *v*, or imitating the capital letters and punctuation of early scribes.

It must not, however, be supposed that great literal accuracy can be attained in every case, for there has not always been an opportunity for collating the documents in type, and, when they are of much extent, the only possible method of completely avoiding mistakes in a few final or unnecessary letters, is to compare the printed copy letter for letter with the originals. I can only lay claim to great care, and be contented with the reflection that few errors of much importance are likely to have escaped notice, leaving those when discovered to expect the courtesy here exhibited to others. Above all, before such a body of error as that just pointed out is alleged, let me mention that there are duplicate copies of several documents in the Council Chamber at Stratford, differing very materially from each other in

their orthography. Many of the early accounts of the Chamberlains are found in duplicate, some of them written at greater length, and containing more information than the brief notices entered in the books of the corporation. Whenever a document here printed differs in any great degree from an early copy, it may be safely concluded that another manuscript has been used.

The Latin documents, I fear, will occasionally bid defiance to a correct grammatical construction, nor must the classical scholar expect or desire this in our old legal papers. The language is peculiar, and the intended construction not always clear, although the sense is generally apparent. The terminations are not filled up, for in many cases they might have been interpreted in more ways than one; but I have printed the contractions *in extenso*, and have left no passage in an unreadable state. The originals have been carefully followed, even when not grammatically accurate. Thus we have *priorissa* for *priorissæ*, p. 4; *filius Johannes*, p. 28; *cum pertinentiis jacencium*, p. 37; *hujus parothia*, p. 116, and numerous other instances; but even such barbarous specimens may serve to show the state of knowledge among a certain class of people at the time, and objections might have been raised against their alteration.

In the selection of the woodcuts, the same star of rigid authenticity has throughout been my guide; and great advantage has been derived from the taste of Mr. F. W. Fairholt, F.S.A., to whose careful pencil the reader is indebted for all the illustrations and fac-similes in this work. Nothing has been copied which will not bear the test of the strictest examination, and, as in the literary portion of this

volume, no allusion will be found to the clumsy and disgraceful forgeries of Shakespearian documents that have so frequently deceived the public for short periods, so nothing of the material which is not unquestionably genuine is here perpetuated. Mr. Fairholt has also carefully abstained from those fanciful imitations which have so little real value, and in which the characteristic features of the original objects are so seldom preserved.

In conclusion, perhaps I may be permitted to allude to the many new facts published in this volume, as evidences of a reasonable confidence in the inexhaustible treasures of our English archives, a belief in hidden stores of knowledge which destroys all reliance on the finality of previous enquiries, leading us to trust to no examinations but our own. Entertaining this belief in its fullest extent, and feeling confident our discoveries are not yet at an end, I venture to suggest the propriety of the manuscripts belonging to our ancient families, especially those in Warwickshire, being searched for information relating to the poet. Need I add, for one, how gratefully I should receive any communication on the subject, or how willingly my services would be rendered in such a cause?

Brixton Hill, Surrey.
Nov. 21*st*, 1847.

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Facsimile from a Letter of Lord Southampton, mentioning Shakespeare

From the Original M.S. in the possession of the Earl of Ellesmere

at sundrie tymes This other hath to name William Shakespeare
and they are both of one comitie and indeede allmost of one
towne both are right famous in their qualities though it longeth
not of yor Lo. gravitie and wisedome to resort unto the places
where they are wont to delight the publique eare Their trust
and sute nowe is not to bee molested in their waye of life
whereby they maintaine them selves and their wives and
families (being both maried and of good reputacon) as well as
the widowes and orphanes of some of their dead fellows. Yo^r
Lo. most bounden at com

H S

Copia vera

[Old Houses in Henley Street, 1810.]

THERE are few subjects in the whole range of English literature presenting greater opportunities for a variety of discursive criticism than are offered to the writer of a Life of SHAKESPEARE; so numerous, indeed, that if he accepted them all in their full extent, no one in these days of condensed learning would reasonably be expected to do justice to the labours of the biographer. Genealogical details, obscure allusions, identities, disputed readings, chronological arguments, and other matters of a like kind, some of great interest, others palpably uninstructive, afford, each in its turn, subjects for dispute which have been argued by editors writing with an especial object, and generally biassed in their consideration of evidence, to an extent altogether unnecessary, for, omitting all controversy not absolutely required by the documents on which our knowledge of the Life is established, the materials which have now been unfolded to us are sufficiently extensive to render their arrangement and discussion a formidable labour in comparison with what would be necessary to perform a similar

office for contemporary poets. It is quite a fallacy in these days to repeat the extravagant dictum of Steevens, or complain how little we are acquainted with William Shakespeare's worldly career and character. We should, on the contrary, be thankful we know more of him than we do of Spenser or of many others, the history of whose lives would probably be so interesting and valuable; and most grateful for the singularly unexpected discoveries of modern times dispelling so much of the darkness and clouds that rested on his personal history. If, bearing in mind the evil above alluded to and endeavouring to avoid it, a new torch is now lighted in "the dark backward" of Shakespeare's time, which shall discover recesses yet unknown to the explorer, and again unfold every path; before its holder is accused of attempting to relumine well-known passages, let it be borne in mind no one has yet told the world the whole of the means by which discoveries have been made. In other words, the evidences on which the history of Shakespeare's life is founded have never been fully exhibited to the public, and this it shall be my endeavour to accomplish in the following pages; not, indeed, without entering into subjects of discussion that to the casual observer might probably appear irrelevant, but, I trust, without exceeding my proper duties by introducing circumstances not essential to the discourse or argument. Our earliest attention will of course be directed to the ancestry of the poet.

The Shakespeares were settled in Warwickshire as early as the fourteenth century, and shortly afterwards we find the name spread through the country, appearing in most of the documentary evidence of any extent we now have relating to that part of England from the time of Henry VI. All the arguments for and against the study of pedigree and genealogy might now be repeated. Shakespeare has told us that "nature cannot choose his origin;" and, failing in

the attempt to discover with any degree of certainty the particular branch from which our poet was descended, we can at least console ourselves with the reflection, whatever consolation the knowledge may be to the curious, that we have at length obtained an approximation to the solution of the momentous question—that "great problem of all," as it is ludicrously termed by one of those antiquaries who regard the value of inquiries of this kind in an inverse ratio to their importance,—who was Shakespeare's grandfather? Before we enter on this subject, it may perhaps not be without its use to direct the reader's attention to the following notices of the name of Shakespeare in Warwickshire* during the century immediately preceding the establishment of our poet's family at Stratford. If we are unable to indicate amongst any of these names Shakespeare's immediate ancestors, the coincidence of the recurrence of the same Christian names will afford a strong presumption that the root of the family was originally the same. They are extracted from a very valuable manuscript on vellum in the possession of Mr. Staunton of Longbridge House, near Warwick, entitled *Registrum fratrum et sororum Gildæ Sanctæ Annæ de Knolle; incipiebatur in die et in festo Sanctæ Annæ anno Domini millesimo* cccc.^{mo} vij.^{o}, a register of the guild of St. Anne of Knolle, from the year 1407 to its dissolution in 1535:

(Circa 1460). Pro anima Ricardi Shakspere et Aliciæ uxor. ejus de Woldiche.
1464, 4 Edw. IV. Johanna Schakespere.
——— Radulphus Schakespeire et Isabella uxor ejus, et pro anima Johannæ uxoris primæ.
——— Ricardus Schakespeire de Wroxsale et Margeria uxor ejus.

* The numerous varieties of orthography in the case of this surname are curious. The list given below supplies some forms not hitherto noticed. There cannot be much doubt that *Shaxper* was the pronunciation in Warwickshire, and I have heard it so pronounced recently by uneducated persons residing in that county. Shakespeare Hart wrote his name "Shaxpeer Hart," in a document dated 1746.

(Circa 1464). Johannes Shakespeyre ejusdem villæ (Rowington) et Alicia uxor ejus.

1476, 16 Edw. IV. Thomas Chacsper et Christian. cons. suæ de Rowneton.

1486, 1 Hen. VII. Pro anima Thomæ Schakspere.

——————— Thomas Shakspere, pro anima ejus.

——————— Thomas Shakspere et Alicia uxor ejus de Balsale.

19 Hen. VII. Orate pro anima Isabellæ Shakspere quondam Priorissa de Wraxale.

3 Hen. VIII. *Ballishalle.* Alicia Shakespere et pro anima Thomæ Shakespere.

——————— *Meridon.* Christophorus Shakespere et Isabella uxor ejus de Pacwode.

18 Hen. VIII. Domina Jane Shakspere.

——————— Ricardus Shakspere et Alicia uxor.

——————— Willielmus Shakspere et Agnes uxor.

——————— Johannes Shakspere et Johanna uxor.

Both public and private records would enable us to increase our early notices of the Shakespeares almost indefinitely. The Shakespeares of Rowington are perhaps most frequently mentioned, and numerous documents respecting them are preserved in the Chapter House, Westminster. They continued to reside there till a late period.* Among the proceedings in the Star Chamber, 7 Feb. 44 Eliz., is a case, Holte v. Thomas Shakespeere of Rowington for being concerned in damages done in the previous May to the common of Bushwood olim Lapworth. This Thomas Shakespeare was a disciple of Jack Cade, signing with a

* The Rowington papers mention the Shakespeares to the close of the last century. The early registers are unfortunately lost. A Margaret Shakespeare was married there in 1665. A MS. copy of the customs of the manor, in the possession of Mr. Lea, dated 1614, exhibits a William Shakespeare as one of the jury at that period. Thomas Shackspear, of Rowington, is assessed on goods of the value of £3 in the Subsidy Roll, 39 Eliz., and Thomas Shaxper, senior, of the same place, is assessed on land of the value of thirty shillings, in a similar roll of 7 James I. Amongst some early undated fragments of records relating to Warwickshire, preserved in the Carlton Ride, I find a mention of a John Shakeseper, of Rowington. If our poet's family had been nearly connected with this branch, it is most probable one of his brothers would have received the Christian name of Thomas. A survey of crown lands in Warwickshire, 4 Jac. I, in the Land Revenue Office, notices a Thomas, George, Richard, and a John Shakespeare, as holding property at Rowington.

mark. The name occurs under various forms. In the year 1589 we find the case of "Marye Ruswell againste John Vale and Katheryn his wyefe, and Aylese Shackspire." The Alice Shakespeare here mentioned was John Vale's mother-in-law. In the same repository of records is a fine, levied Mich. 12 Jac. I, "inter Willielmum Shackespeare et Georgium Shackespeare quer. et Thomam Spencer armigerum, Christoferum Flecknoe, et Thomam Tompson deforc. de octo acris pasturæ cum pertinentiis in Claverdon alias Claredon," and this person was not the only one our poet had the fortune to honour by an identity of appellation. A William Saxspere was drowned in the Avon in 1579, as appears from the following curious entry in the parish register of St. Nicholas, Warwick, which has not yet been printed with literal accuracy: "1579, Junii: sexto die hujus mensis sepultus fuet Gulielmus Saxspere, qui demersus fuet in rivulo aquæ qui vel quæ vocatur Avona."

This William Shakespeare of Warwick was probably the son of Thomas Shakespeare, of that town, whose other son is also mentioned in the same register: "1598, Junii 21. Solemnizatum matrimonium inter Thomam Shaxeper et Elizabeth Letherberrow." Thomas Shaxpere gent. was elected bailiff of Warwick on 1 Nov. 10 Jac. I, and again 1 Nov. 2 Car. I, and the family was resident at Warwick during the whole of that century. The name is spelt Shackspeere in the Black Book of Warwick, f. 243, a very valuable MS. belonging to the Corporation; and he is also alluded to in the municipal records of Stratford, but there does not appear to be any evidence that he was even remotely connected with our poet's family.

Other branches of the Shakespeares were located at Wroxhall, Hampton, Lapworth, Nuneaton, Kineton, and various other places in Warwickshire; but notwithstanding the masses of evidence we possess in which the name occurs,

and laborious antiquarian researches repeated for a century, the history of our poet's descent is still miserably imperfect. If genealogical inquiries are ever worthy of pursuit, they must have some value in the reasonable curiosity to ascertain from what class of society the greatest author of the world arose. We may well be content that this information has not been withheld, and the tracer of the pedigree any further back in the lapse of time will scarcely deserve our thanks. The state of the evidence we possess on this subject may thus be briefly enumerated.

On the 17th of July, 1550, Robert Arden,* the maternal grandfather of Shakespeare, executed the following deed, conveying certain lands and tenements in Snitterfield, then in the occupation of Richard Shakespeare, in trust for three daughters, *after the death of Robert and Agnes Arden.*

Sciant præsentes et futuri quod ego Robertus Ardern de Wylmecote in parochia de Aston Cantlowe in com. Warr. husbandman dedi, concessi, et hac præsenti carta mea tripartiter indentat. confirmavi Adæ Palmer de Aston Cantlowe prædict. et Hugoni Porter de Snytterfylde in com. prædicto, totum illud mesuagium meum cum suis pertinentiis in Snytterfylde prædict. *quæ nunc sunt in tenura cujusdam Ricardi Shakespere,* ac omnia illa mea terr. prat. pascuas et pasturas cum suis pertinentiis in Snytterfylde prædict. eidem mesuagio spectant. et pertinent. quæ nunc sunt in tenura prædicti Ricardi Shakespere, Habendum et tenendum omnia prædict. mesuagium terr. prat. pascuas et pasturas cum suis pertinentiis prædictis Adæ Palmer et Hugoni Porter hæredibus et assign. suis ad usum et opus mei prædicti Roberti Ardern et Agnetis nunc uxoris meæ pro termino vitæ nostrum eorundem Roberti et Agnetis, ac diucius viventis nostrum, et post decessum diucius viventis nostrum prædictorum Roberti Ardern et Agnetis nunc uxoris meæ, tunc ad usus et opus sequent. Scilicet, unam terciam partem omnium prædict. mesuagii terr. prat. pascuar. et pasturar. cum suis pertin. ad usum et opus Agnetis Strynger nunc uxoris Thomæ

* Business must frequently have led Robert Arden to Stratford. In the proceedings of the Bailiff's Court on Nov. 30th, 1553, mention is made of a suit he had commenced against John Dyckson, to recover the sum of four shillings. His brother, Thomas Ardern, is mentioned in a list of the justices of the peace for Warwickshire, 25 Hen. VIII, in the Miscell. Pap. Rolls House, ii. 189. In a Subsidy Roll, 2 Edw. VI, at Carlton Ride, Robart Arderne, of Aston Cantlowe, is assessed at x. *s.*

Strynger, ac nuper uxoris Johannis Hewyns, dudum de Bereley, modo defunct. filiæ mei prædict. Roberti Ardern, ac hæredum et assign. ejusdem Agnetis Strynger in perpetuum. Et alteram terciam partem omnium eorundem mesuagii terr. prat. pasc. et pastur. cum suis pertinentiis, ad usum et opus Johannæ Lambert, nunc uxoris Edwardi Lambert de Barton super lez Hothe, aliæ filiæ mei prædicti Roberti Ardern, ac hæredum et assign. ejusdem Johannæ Lambert in perpetuum. Aliamque terciam partem omnium prædictorum mesuagii terr. prat. pasc. et pastur. cum suis pertinentiis, ad usum et opus Katerinæ Etkyns, nunc uxoris Thomæ Etkyns de Wylmecote prædict. aliæ filiæ mei prædicti Roberti Ardern, ac hæredum et assign. ejusdem Katerinæ Etkyns in perpetuum, de capitalib. dominis feod. illi. per servic. inde prius debit. et de jure consuet. Et ego vero prædictus Robertus Ardern et hæredes mei, omnia prædict. mesuagium terr. prat. pasc. et pastur. cum suis pertin. præfatis Adæ Palmer et Hugoni Porter hæredibus et assign. suis ad usus et opus supradict. contra omnes gentes warantizabim. et in perpetuum defendemus per præsentes. Sciatis insuper me prædictum Robertum Ardern plenam et pacificam possessionem et seisinam de et in prædict. mesuagio terr. prat. pasc. et pastur. cum suis pertin. præfatis Adæ Palmer et Hugoni Porter ad usus et opus superius specificat. secundum vim, formam, tenorem, et effectum hujus præsentis cartæ meæ tripartiter indentat. inde eis confect. in propria persona mea tradidisse et liberasse. In cujus rei testimonium cuilibet parti hujus præsentis cartæ meæ tripartiter indentat. sigillum meum apposui. Dat. decimo septimo die Julii anno regni domini Edwardi sexti, Dei gratia Angliæ Franc. et Hibern. regis, Fidei defensoris, et in terra ecclesiæ Anglicanæ et Hibernicæ supremi capitis quarto.*

Ten days previously he had executed a similar deed of other property in Snitterfield, for the benefit of three other daughters, Jocose Arden, Alicia Arden, and Margaret Webbe, the latter of whom was the wife of Alexander Webbe, who was afterwards the purchaser of several of the shares of the Snitterfield property, belonging to his sisters-in-law. By conveyances, dated on the 14th and 21st of December, 1519, we find that Robert Arden purchased property in

* The portion of Johanna Lambert was sold by her and her husband on June 1st, 1581. She was aunt to William Shakespeare, and neither she nor her husband could write their own names. Their marks are thus subjoined to the deed conveying the property now mentioned.

The merke of Edmond Lambert.

The merke of Johanne Lambert.

Snitterfield from Richard Rushby and Agnes his wife, and he also bought a tenement in the same village on October 1st, 1529. Mr. Collier particularizes the property afterwards in the occupation of Richard Shakespeare, but he was probably not aware that, as early as 16 Hen. VI, die Lunæ proximo post festum Inventionis Sanctæ Crucis, May, 1438, land in Snitterfield was conveyed *Thomæ Ardern de Wylmecote et Roberto Ardern filio ejusdem Thomæ Ardern.* These were ancestors on the mother's side of William Shakespeare.

This Richard Shakespeare of Snitterfield was in all probability Shakespeare's grandfather. Mr. Collier was the first to promulgate this theory, but he grounded it principally on the possibility that it was in this way John Shakespeare became introduced to the Ardens. Another and a much stronger reason is found in the fact that John Shakespeare had a brother Henry, *who lived at Snitterfield*, and was most probably a son of Richard Shakespeare, the registers of that village showing only one family of the name.

1581-2. Baptizatus fuet. John filius Thomæ Shaxper the xth of March, 1581.

1586, 4 Sept. Baptysed Henry Townsend, the sonn of John Townsend and Darrity his wyff, Willm Meaydes, Henry Shaxsper, Elizabeth Perkes, pleages.

1595. Johanna Shaxspere mortua est, et sepulta Januarii quinto anº 1595.

1596. Henrey Saxspere was bureyd the xxix.th day of December, anno 1596.

1596-7. Margret Saxspere widow, being times the wyff of Henry Shakspere, was buried ix. Feb.

1636. Robert Hodgkin and Elizabeth Shakuspeare, of Warwicke, were married at Snitfeild the 16th day of June.

That Shakespeare's father had a brother Henry* is shown by the following declaration, filed in the Court of Record

* His name occurs in the following memorandum, which probably relates to a suit concerning property in Snitterfield: "Wytnesses to be examynyd for Robert Webbe and others defendauntes.—Adam Palmer. John Henley. William Perkes. Hary Shakspere. William Betson." He is again mentioned in the will of Christopher Smyth alias Court of Stratford, made November 2d, 1586, to which is subjoined a list of "detts due to me the sayd Christopher," and

at Stratford, where an action was brought by Nicholas Lane against John Shakespeare for debt, 1 Feb., 29 Eliz., 1587. The original is at Stratford.

Johannes Shakspere attachiatus fuit per servient. ad clavem ibidem secundum consuetudinem burgi prædicti ad respondendum Nicholao Lane de placito transgressionis super casum, &c., et sunt pleg. de proseq. Johannes Doe et Willielmus Roe, &c. Et unde idem Nicholaus Lane, per Thomam Trussell, attorn. suum, dicit quod cum quarto die Junii anno regni dominæ nostræ Elizabethæ, Dei gratia Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ reginæ, fidei defensoris, &c. vicessimo octavo, hic apud Stretford prædictum ac infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ, quoddam colloquium tractatum et habitum fuit inter præfatum Johannem Shakesper et dictum Nicholaum Lane de quodam debito viginti et duarum libr. legalis monetæ Angliæ in quibus Henricus Shaxpere, *frater dicti Johannis*, debito modo indebitatus fuit præfato Nicholao Lane, et super colloquium illud aggreat. et concordat. fuit. Et postea, scilicet die et anno supradicto, hic apud Stretford prædictum et infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ pro et in consideratione præmissorum ac pro et in consideracione quatuor denariorum legalis, &c. præfato Johanni ad tunc et ibidem per præfatum Nicholaum præmanibus solut. super se assumpsit, et præfato Nicholao ad tunc et ibidem fideliter promisit quod si dictus Henricus Shaksper non solveret præfato Nicholao decem libras, parcellum dictæ sommæ viginti et duarum librarum, in festo sancti Michaelis archangeli ex tunc proxime sequent., quod tunc ipse idem Johannes Shaksper dictam sommam decem librarum parcellum &c. præfato Nicholao bene et fideliter solvere et contentare vellet, cum inde eum hoc requisit. fuer. etc. Et prædictus Nicholaus dicit in facto quod prædictus Henricus Shaksper non solvit præfato Nicholao Lane dictam sommam decem librarum parcellum &c. in festo sancti Michaeli archangelli prædict. seu unquam antea vel postea. Unde actio accrevit præfato Nicholao Lane ad habendum et exequend. de præfato Johanne Shaksper dictam sommam decem librarum parcellum etc. secundum assumptiones et fidel. promissiones suas prædictas, etc. prædictæ sommæ; Johannes Shaksper assumpt. et fideles promiss. suas prædict. quoad dictas decem libras, parcellum, &c. minime curans vel ponderans, sed machinans ipsum Nicholaum in hac parte callide et deceptive decipere et defraudare, dictam sommam decem librarum, parcellum &c. præfato Nicholao Lane nondum solvit seu aliquo modo contentavit, sed ill. ei huc usque solvere aut contentare omnino contradixit et adhuc contradicit, licet sæpius ad hoc secundum assump. et fidel. promiss. suas prædictas requisitus fuit. Unde dictus Nicholaus Lane dicit quod deterior est et dampnum habet ad valenciam viginti librarum. Et inde produc. sect. &c.

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amongst them, "Item, Henry Shaxspere of Snytterfild oweth me v.*li.* ix.*s.*" The last notice of Henry Shakespeare before his death occurs in the registry of the Court of Record, 29 Sept. 38 Eliz. Henricus Shackespere attachiatus fuit per servient. ad clav. ibidem ad sect. Johannis Tomlyns in placito debiti, Henr. Wylson m. pro deff.

We here find John Shakespeare becoming surety to his brother Henry in a case of debt, and the latter not paying, his brother was proceeded against for the amount. Henry was probably in difficulties, and while this paper show John Shakespeare's kindness to a relative, it leads one to suppose it was not the sole instance. This may be the case with some other entries hereafter to be quoted from the same record, in which the name of the former occurs as a defendant.

Robert Arden, in his will dated 1556, mentions his wife's jointure in Snitterfield, which was doubtlessly other property in that village, not that which is mentioned in the deeds quoted above. The following document shows that this settlement was made in 4 Edw. VI., 1550, in which year he probably married Agnes Arden, and it does not seem improbable that Mary Shakespeare's interest in Snitterfield was on this same property, in the occupation of Richard Shakespeare as late as 1560,* the description in both deeds being identical:

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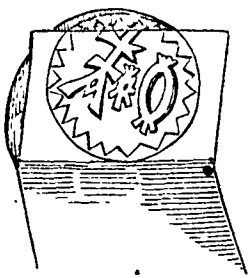
* I refer to the following indenture, which is sufficiently curious to be given entire:—

This indenture made the xxj.th daye of Maie in the seconde yeare of the reign of our soveraign Lady Elyzabeth by the grace of God Queene of Englande, Fraunce and Irelande defender of the faith, &c. Betwene Agnes Arderne of Wylmecote in the Countie of Warr: wydowe on the one partie and Alexander Webbe of Bereley in the same countie husbandeman on the other partie; Wytnessyth that the sayd Agnes Arderne ffor dyverse and sondry consyderations hath demysed graunted sett and to fferme lett, and by these presents demyseth graunteth setteth and to fferme letteth unto the said Alexander Webbe and to his assignes All those her two measuages with a cottage with all and singuler their appurtenaunces in Snytteifeld, and a yarde and a halfe of ayrable lande therunto belongyng, with all lands medowes pastures commons profitts and commodities in any wyse therunto apperteynynge, scituate lying and beyng in the towne and ffylds of Snytterfield afforsaid, all whiche now are in the occupation of Richarde Shakespere, John Henley, and John Hargreve, To have and to holde the said two measuages or tenements and cottage wyth their appurtenaunces a yarde and a half of lande arrable and all other the premysses with all and synguler their appurtenaunces unto the said Alexander Webbe his executers and assignes ffrom the ffeast of the annuncyacion of our Lady next ensuyng the date hereof untyll the ende and terme of ffourtie years next and ymmediately followyng fully to be completed and ended, yff the said Agnes Arderne so longe do lyve, yeldinge and paying therefore yearely duryng the said

To all and to whom thes presentes shall come, Agnes Arden of Wilmcote in the countie of Warr: widowe greting, knowe ye that I the sayd Agnes have receaved of Allexander Webb and still doe receave of his executors and assignes for twoe messuages one cottage and all lands and tenements with thappurtenaunces belonginge to the same lyinge and being in Snitterfield in the countie aforesaid, one yearly rent of fortie shillings, according to the demise thereof made by me the sayd Agnes to the sayd Allexander Webb bearing date the one and twenteth daie of Maii in the second yeare of the raigne of the Queenes Majesties that nowe is for the terme of fortie yeares, if I the sayd Agnes so long doe lyve; Of which sayd messuage and premisses estate was made to me the sayd Agnes for terme of my lyffe by Roberte Arden my late husband in the fourth yeare of the raigne of the late King Edward the sixt, of which sayd estate for terme of my lyffe I am yet seased. All which to be true I have thought good to testifie by this my wryting, and am and wilbe readye to depose the same upon myne othe at all tymes and places if I weare able to travell, being aged and impotent. In wytnes wherof to thes presentes I have putt my seale the fifte day of July, 1580.

the marke of Agnes Arden.



Sealed and delyvered in the presence of Adam Palmer, and Anthony Osbaston and John Hill.

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terme unto the said Agnes Arderne or her assignes ffourtie shillyngs of lawfull money of Englande to be payde at two termes in the yeare, that is to saye at the ffeast of Saynt Michaell tharchaungell and the annunciation of our Ladye by equall portions; And the said Alexander Webbe covenaunteth by these presents to dyscharge paye and save harmeles the said Agnes Arderne of all maner of chieff rents and suete of court dewe to the lorde of the ffee, and all other charges belonging to the forsaid measuages or tenements; and yf it happen the said rent of ffourtie shillyngs to be byhynde unpayd in parte or in all after any of the said ffeasts or dayes of payment at whiche yt ought to be payde as is afforsaid by the space of one month, beyng lawfully asked and demanded, and no sufficient distres can or may be founde in and upon the premysses by the space of syxe weks next after any of the sayd ffeasts, that then it shall be lawfull to the said Agnes Arden and her assignes to re-entree and have agayn their premysses and every parcell thereof as in her first estate, and the said Alexander Webbe his executers and assignes therof to expell and putt out, any thynge herein contayned to the contrary in any wyse notwythstandynge. Also the said Agnes covenaunteth and graunteth to and wyth the sayd Alexander and his assignes, that the said Alexander his executors and assignes shall have enjoy and take duryng all the said terme sufficient housebote, ploughbote, cartbote and hedgebote, wyth loppes and shrods growyng and beyng in and upon the premysses, or any parcell therof, for the defense and use of the same howses

Agnes Arden did not long survive the execution of this document, the register of Aston Cantlow containing the following entry in 1580,* "the xxix. day of December was bureyd Agnis Arden wydow, anno prædicto." Her will was proved at Worcester, March 31st, 1581, and the only printed copy of it being very inaccurate, I subjoin a careful transcript, with the inventory of her goods, the latter not having yet been published:

In the name of God ..... yeare of our Lorde God 1579, and in the ..... yeare of the raigne off our Soveraigne ..... Queene Elyzabethe, by the grace off ..... Fraunce, and Irlande, Queene, deffendris of the faythe, &c.; I, Agnes Ardenne, of Wylmcote in the perishe of Aston Cantlowe, wydowe, do make my laste wyll and testamente in manner and forme followinge. First, I bequethe my soule to Almighty God my maker and redeemer, and my bodie to the earthe. Item, I geve and bequethe to the poore people and inhabitaunce of Bearley iiij.*s.* Item, I geve and bequeth to the poore people inhabited in Aston perishe, x.*s.*, to be equallie devided by the discrecion of my overseers. Item, I geve and bequeth to everi one of my god-children xij.*d.* a peece. Item, I give and bequeth to Averie Fullwod ij. sheepe, yf they doe lyve after my desease. Item, I give and bequeth to Rychard Petyvere j. sheepe; and to Nycolas Mase, j. sheepe; and Elizabeth Gretwhiche and Elyzabethe Bentley, eyther of them one shepe. Item, I geve and bequeeth to everie off

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and clousures withowt doyng any wast. Also the said Alexander Webbe covenaunteth by these presents yearely to repayre maynteyne and keape all and all maner of necessary reparacions perteynyng and belongingc to the forsayd tenements cottages, havyng sufficient tymbre on the forsaid grounds yf any be there to be hadd for the same. And the said Agnes Arderne and her assignes [let] the said two messuages or tenements with the sayd cotages a yarde and a halfe of lande and all other the premysses with their appurtenaunces unto the said Alexander Webbe his executers and assignes for the said yearely rent in manner and fourme afforsaid, agaynst her and her assignes shall awarrunt and defende duryng the said terme of xl^ti^ years, if she live so longe. In wytnes wherof the parties afforsaid to these present indentures enterchaungeably have putt to their seales the day and yeare abovewrytten.

Selyd and delyveryd in the presents of John Somervyle, and Thomas Osbarston, and others.

* The same register has the following entries: 1581, the viij^th^ of August was bureyd Christofer Ardern; 1588, the xxix. day of March was bureyd Elizabeth Arden. Many persons of the name of Hill are mentioned: 1579, the first of March Ric. Hill the sonn of Roger Hill was baptized; 1585, the second of December Marget Hill the daughter of Roger Hill was baptized; 1587, the vij^th^ of January John Hill the sonn of Roger Hyll (Bapt.); 1617, Mary Hill and Anne Hill, the daughters of Richard Hill of Shellfield, were baptized the xix^th^ daye of Aprill; 1581, the xvj. day of January was marcyd Thomas Cokes and Margeri Hill; the xj. day of ffebruary Humfry Tylbye mareyd Margot Hill; 1587, the xxv^th^ day of the sam (Dec.) was bureyd Thomas Hill.

Jhon Hill's children everi one of them one sheep; and allso to John Fullwodes children everi one of them one shepe. My wyll is, that they said shepe soe geven them shall goe fforward in a stocke to they use of they sayd children untyll the come to the age of discrecion. Item, I geve and bequethe to John Payge and his wyfe, the longer liver off them, vj.*s.* viij.*d.*, and to John Page his brother, j. strike of wheat and one strike of maulte. I geve to John Fullwod and Edwarde Hill my godchilde, everi one of them, one shipe more. Allso I geve to Robarte Haskettes iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* Also, I geve to John Peter ij.*s.* And allso to Henrie Berrie, xij.*d.* Item, I give to Jhohan Lamberde, xij.*d.* And to Elizabethe Stiche, my olde gowne. Item, [I geve] and bequeth to John Hill my sonne, my parte and moitie of my croppe in the ffieldes, as well wheate, barley, and pease, painge for the same half the lordes rente and dueties belonginge to the same, so that my wyll is the sayd John Hill shall have the nexte croppe uppon the grounde after my desease. I geve to the said Jhon Hill my best platter of the best sorte, and my best platter of the second sorte, and j. poringer, one sawcer, and one best candlesticke. And also I geve to the said John two paire of sheetes. I give to said Jhon Hill my second potte, my best panne. Item, I geve and bequeth to Jhon Fullwod, my sonne in lawe, all the rest of my housholde stuffe. Item, I give and bequeth to John Hill my sonne, one cowe with the white rumpe. And also I geve to John Fullwod, j. browne steare of the age of two yeares olde. Item, I give and bequeth to my brother Alexander Webbes children, everi one of them xij.*d.* a peece. The rest of all my goodes moveables, and unmoveables, not bequethid, my bodie brought home, my debtes and legacies paid, I geve and bequeth to John Fullwod and to John Hill, to the use and behalf of the said John Fullwodes and John Hilles children, to be delivered unto them and everie of them when the come to age of discrecion. Yf any of the said children doe die before they recover their partes so geven by me, their partes deseased shall remain to the other so levinge with the said John Fullwod and John Hill, [whom] I do ordaine and make my ffull executors of this my last wyll. Allso, I ordeyne and make my overseers, Addam Palmer, George Gibbes. These being witnesses, Thomas Edkins, Richarde Petifere, with others.

The inventorie of all the goodes moveable and unmoveable of Annes Ardenne of Wylmcote deceased, praised by Thomas Boothe, Addam Palmer, George Gibbes, Thomas Edkins thelder, Thomas Edkins the younger, the xix^th^ day of Januarye, anno regni Elizabethæ reginæ xxiij.

Inprimis in the halle twoe table bordes with a coobbarde and a painted clothe, three coshens with shilves, other formes and benches - - viij.*s.*

Item, three pottes of brasse, ij. calderons, ij. brasse pannes, ij. peeces of pewter, with iij. candelstickes, with two saltes, xvj.*s.*

Item, ij. broches, j. payre of cobbardes, j. fireshovell, with pott-hokes and linkes for the same, xvj.*d.*

Item, in the chambers her apparrell, l.*s.*

Item, the beddinge and bedstides with apreeware in the said chambers, iij.*li.* iij.*s.* iij.*d.*

Item, three coffers with a peece of woollen clothe, xv.*s.*
Item, the cowperie ware, with a maulte mylle, one knedinge troughe with syves, and a stryke - - - - - - x.*s.*
Item, ffowre oxenne, ffowre kyne, ij. yearlinge calves xij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iij.*d.*
Item, xxxviijth sheepe - - - - - iij.*s.*
Item, three horses and one mare - - - - iiij.*li.*
Item, five score pigges - - - - xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, wayne and wayne geares, plowe and plowgeres, carte and cart geares - - - - - - - - xxx.*s.*
Item, the wheate in the barne her parte, iiij.*li.*
Item, her part of barly in the barne, iij *li.*
Item, her parte of hey in the barnes, xiiij.*s.*
Item, the wheate one grounde in the fieldes her parte, v.*li.*
Item, her parte of peason, iii.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Summa totalis, xlv.*li.*

It has been proved by Mr. Hunter, and appears indeed from this will, that Agnes Arden was first married to a person of the name of Hill. She was, therefore, the second wife of Robert Arden, married probably to him in 1550, and was only step-mother to the family of seven daughters, of whom Mary, the wife of John Shakespeare, was the youngest. Shakespeare's grandmother on either side has still to be discovered. Mary Hill married John Fullwood in 1561, at Aston Cantlow, "John ffullwood and Marey Hill weare mareyd the xv.th of November."* Their children are mentioned in the will of Agnes Arden, who seems to have been estranged from the family of her second husband, for even if we suppose she did not approve of the matrimonial choice of Mary Shakespeare, there seems to be no reason why remembrances of some kind should not have been given to the other branches of the family.

Be this as it may, Mary Arden shared the affection and confidence of her father with her sister Alice, being

* This family long held property in Wilmecote. Averie Fulwood, in his will dated Feb. 21st, 1630-1, says, "Item, I doe give and bequeathe unto my sonne Averie Fullwood that parte of howsehold stuffe which was putt into his possession att the tyme thatt I did sett and lett my livinge in Wilmecoate in the countie of Warr."

joined with her as executrix to his will, November 24th, 1556. To Mary he leaves his estate called Ashbies in Wilmecote, a farm of considerable value. Robert Arden, as appears from this will, was a substantial yeoman, a class whose proverbial vigour and honour would do no discredit to a poet's descent. Richard Shakespeare was also a considerable holder of land, and thus we find the poet of nature rising where we would wish to find him rise, from the inhabitants of the valley and woodland, carrying in his blood the impress of the healthiest and most virtuous class possessed in those days by England. The reader will peruse with interest the will of Robert Arden,*. Shakespeare's maternal grandfather:

In the name of God, Amen, the xxiiij.th daye of November in the yeare of our Lorde God 1556, in the thirde and the forthe yeare of the raygne of our soveragne Lorde and ladye, Phylipe and Marye, kyng and quene, &c. I Robart Arden of Wyllmcote in the paryche of Aston Cauntlow, secke in bodye and good and perfett of rememberenc, make this my laste will and testement in maner and forme folowyng.

Fyryste, I bequethe my solle to Allmyghtye God and to our bleside Laydye Sent Marye, and to all the holye compenye of heven, and my bodye to be beryde in the churchyarde of Seynt Jhon the baptyste in Aston aforsayde.

Allso I give and bequethe to my youngste dowghter Marye all my lande in Willmecote, cawlide Asbyes, and the crop apon the grounde sowne and tyllide as hitt is. And vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* of monye to be payde orr ere my goodes be devydide. Allso I gyve and bequethe to my dawghter Ales the thyrde parte of all myc goodes moveable and unmoveable n ffylde and towne, after my dettes and leggeses be performyde, besydes that goode she hathe of her owne att this tyme. Allso I gyve and bequethe to Agnes my wyfe vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* apon this condysione, that [she] shall sofer my dowghter Ales quyetlye to ynyoye halfe my copye houlde in Wyllmcote dwryng the tyme of her wyddowewhodde: and if she will nott soffer my dowghter Ales quyetlye to occuppye halfe with her, then I will that my wyfe shall have butt iij.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.* and her gintur in Snyterfylde.

Item, I will that the resedowe of all my goodes moveable & unmoveable, my ffuneralles & my dettes dyschargyde, I gyve & bequethe to my other cheldren to be equaleye devidide amongeste them by the descreshyon of Adam Palmer, Hugh Porter of Snytterfyld, and Jhon Skerlett, whome I do orden &

* It has been previously printed, but most inaccuratcly, in Malone's Shakespeare. The original is preserved at Worcester.

make my overseeres of this my last will & testament, & they to have for ther peynes takyng in this behalfe xx.*s.* apese. Allso I orden and constytute & make my ffull excequtores Ales & Marye my dowghteres of this my last will & testament, and they to have no more for ther peynes takyng now as afore geven them. Allso I gyve & bequethe to every house that hathe no teme in the paryche of Aston to every howse iiij.*d.*

Thes beyng wyttnesses,

Sir Wylliam Bouton, Curett.
Adam Palmer.
Jhon Skerlett.
Thomas Jhenkes.
William Pytt.
with other mo.

Probat. fuit &c. Wigorn. &c. xvj°. die mensis Decembris anno Domini, 1556.

The Fnventory of all the goodes moveable and unmoveable of Robart Ardennes of Wyllmcote late desseside, made the ix*th day of December in the thyrde & the forthe yeare of the raygne of our soveraygne lorde and ladye Phylipe and Marye, kyng and quen, &c.* 1556.

Imprimis, in the halle ij. table bordes, iij. choyeres, ij. fformes, one cobbowrde, ij. coshenes, iij. benches & one lytle table with shellves, presede att, viij.*s.*

It. iij. peyntide clothes in the hall and v. peyntid clothes in the chamber, vij. peire of shettes, ii. cofferes, one which, preside at xviiij.*s.*

It. v. borde clothes, ij. toweles & one dyeper towelle, presid att vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

It. one ffether bedde, ij. mattereses, viij. canvases, one coverlett, iij. bosteres, one pelowe, iiij. peyntida clothes, one whyche, presid att xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*

It. in the kechen iiij. panes, iiij. pottes, iij. candell stykes, one bason, one chafyng dyche, ij. cathernes, ij. skellettes, one frying pane, a gredyerene, and pott hanginges with hookes, presed att lj.*s.* viij.*d.*

It. one broche, a peare of cobbardes, one axe, a bill, iiij. nagares, ij. hatchettes, an ades, a mattoke, a yren crowe, one ffatt, iiij. barrelles, iiij. payles, a quyrne, a knedyng trogh, a lonng seve, a hansaw, presid at xx.*s.* ij.*d.*

It. viij. oxen, ij. bollokes, vij. kyne, iiij. weyyng caves, xxiiij.*li.*

It. iiij. horses, iij. coltes, presid att viij.*li.*

It. lto. [52] shepe presid att vij.*li.*

It. the whate in the barnes, & the barley, presid att xviij.*li.*

It. the heye & the pease, ottes & the strawe, presed att iij.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

It. ix. swyne presid att xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*

It. the bees & powltrye, presed att v.*s.*

It. carte & carte geares, & plogh & plogh geares with harrowes, presed att xl.*s.*

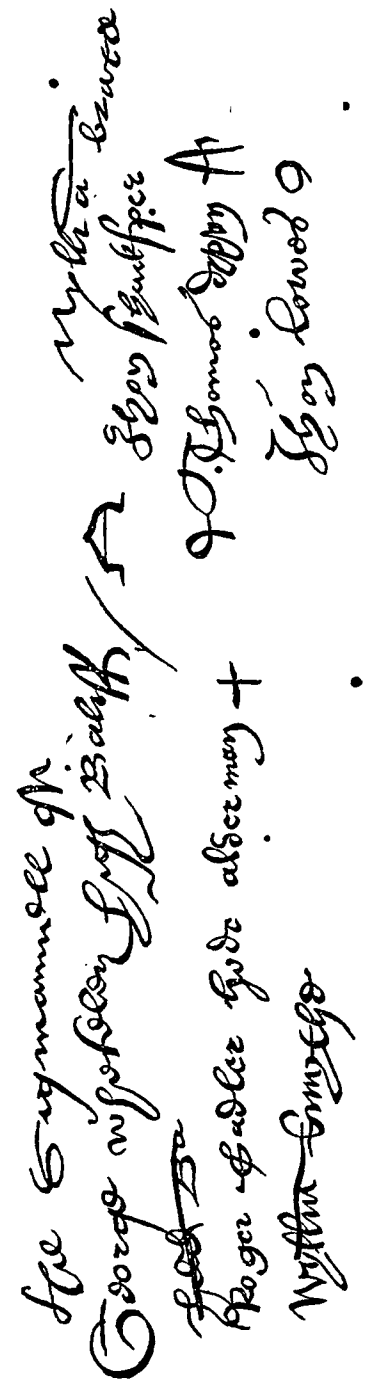
It. the wodd in the yarde, & the batten in the roffe, presid att xxx.*s.*

It. the wheate in the ffylde, presid att vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Summa totalis, lxxvij.*li.* xj.*s.* x.*d.*

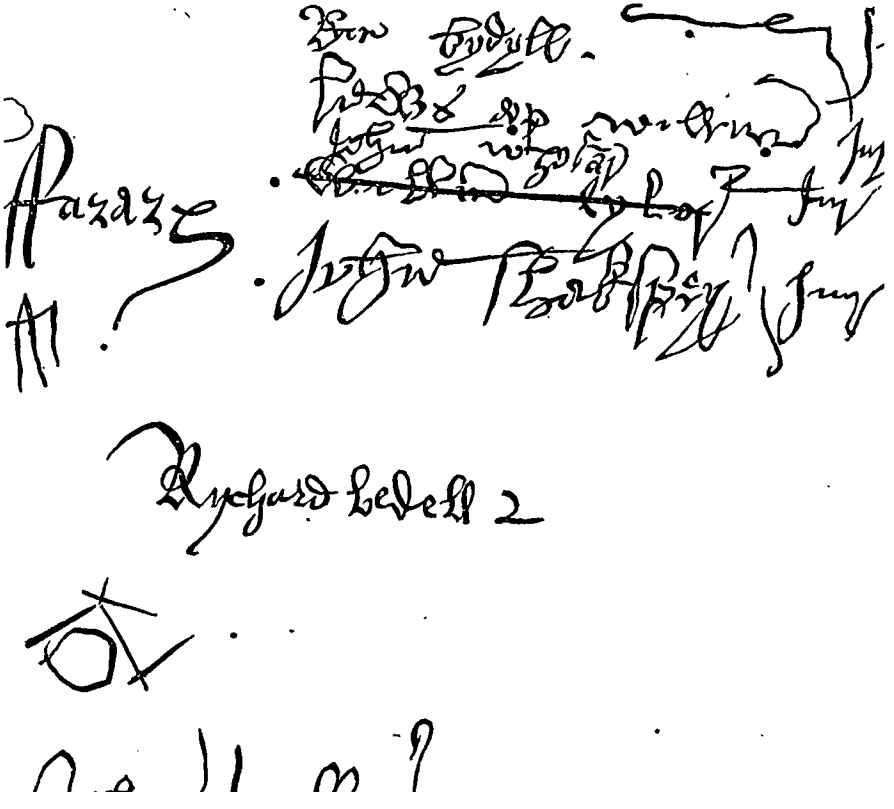
The Ardens, as we have already seen, were established in the parish of Aston Cantlow as early as 1438, and thus Shakespeare's ancestors, on the maternal side, had been landed proprietors for considerably more than a century before the marriage of his father. According to Mr. Collier, Robert Arden, Mary Shakespeare's grandfather, was nephew to Sir John Arden, who died in 1526, and who had been an esquire of the body to Henry VII. It was most probably one of the Ardens who is referred to in the papers at the College of Arms, respecting a grant of arms to John Shakespeare, "whose antecessors were for there valeant and faithefull service advaunced and rewarded by the most prudent prince King Henry the Seventh." The three drafts of the paper in which this passage occurs exhibit alterations which show the uncertainty regarding the exact place in the pedigree in which these "antecessors" were to be placed, and the rolls of that reign do not contain the name of Shakespeare. We shall hereafter have occasion to refer more particularly to this subject, now merely quoting Harrison, who wrote about 1580, and who tells us that men not in trade, and willing to pay for the honour, "shall for monie have a cote and armes bestowed upon him by heralds, who in the charter of the same *doo of custome pretend antiquitie and service, and manie gaie things.*"

It would be very desirable to obtain more positive evidence in all these discussions, but what is now before us will enable future biographers to say, without risking the accusation of presumption, that John Shakespeare, father of the ever-living poet, was the son of a substantial farmer at Snitterfield. He came to reside as a tradesman at Stratford-upon-Avon about the year 1551. No long time elapsed before he filled the successive offices of the corporation, having attained the highest elevation in 1568, when he was elected High Bailiff. It is sufficiently evident that he was during the earlier part of his career at Stratford in thriving



circumstances; and it is satisfactory to know he was esteemed a good man of business and a careful accountant. Had it been otherwise he would hardly have been selected to prepare the accounts of the corporations for chamberlains who were either unequal to the duty or unable from other circumstances to attend to them :—"thaccompt of William Tylor and William Smythe chamburlens made by John Shakspeyr the xv^{t} day of February in the eight yere of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lady Elyzabeth." Yet John Shakespeare could not write his own name! This fact has been recently attempted to be overruled, but sufficient evidence will here be adduced to place it beyond the reach of further doubt. Under the date of September 27th, 1565, we have, in the original book of the corporation still preserved at Stratford, an order signed by nineteen names, aldermen and burgesses. Among these, in the position indicated by the accompanying fac-simile, is found the name of Jhon Shacksper. It will be observed that his mark is under his name, opposite to the name of Thomas Dyxon, who was apparently compelled to place his mark on the other side.

The name of John Shakespeare is undoubtedly written by the same hand which transcribed the names of four other persons of that Christian name found in the same column. To say that they are not written by one person, merely because the upper stroke of the letter *h* is in a small degree longer in one instance than in the other, could only be asserted by those who are quite unaccustomed to the examination of ancient writings. But we have several instances of John Shakespeare's mark, and in the following, which occurs in a list of names appended to the proceedings of a court-leet, dated 6 Oct. 1 Eliz. 1559, we find it amongst others altogether detached from the name.



Malone says it was his usual custom to set his mark lower than his name, and he correctly adds that in the latter part of his life he contented himself with making a cross instead of the mark he had previously used. It will be asked, perhaps, why he should have changed his mark at a later period; and I suspect the reply will contain an argument fixing the date of his occupations more correctly than has yet been accomplished. Of this hereafter.

John Shakespeare resided in Henley street, Stratford, as early as 1552, and seems to have commenced business as a glover, for we find him so described in the register of the proceedings of the bailiff's court, dated June 17th, 1556,* when Thomas Siche brought an action against him for the sum of £8 :—

"Stretford, ss. Cur. Philippi et Mariæ, Dei gratia regis et reginæ Angliæ, Hispaniarum, &c. secundo et tercio, ibidem tent. die Marcurii, videlicet xvij° die Junij, anno prædicto, coram Johanni Burbage ballivo, &c.

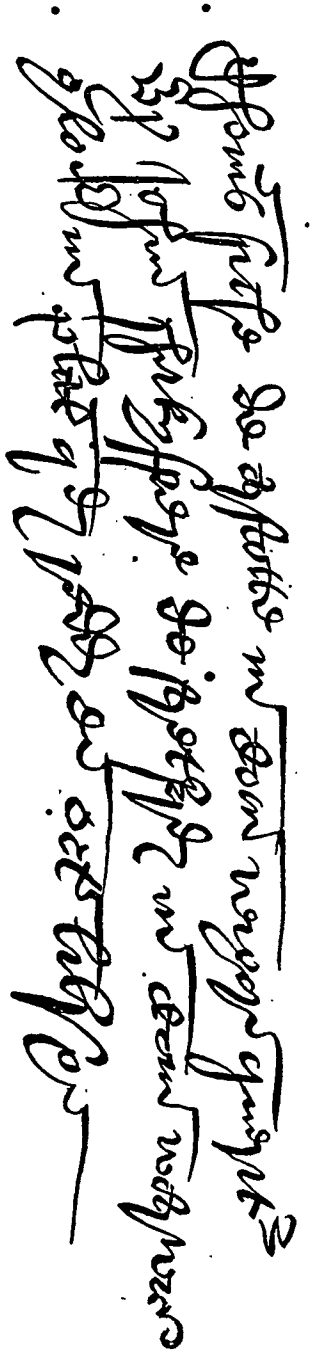
"Thomas Siche de Arscotte in com. Wigorn. queritur versus Johannem Shakyspere de Stretford in com. Warwici *glover* in placito quod redd. ei octo libras, &c."

This being the only passage in which his trade is noticed, I present the reader with a fac-simile recently made with great care by Mr. Fairholt, that given by Mr. Knight not being very accurate.† It is by no means unusual for us to find an English word of this kind in the middle of a Latin sentence in such documents, and there cannot be a moment's hesitation in writing it *glover*, the contraction for the last syllable being unquestionably *er*. We have the

* This date has always been incorrectly given 1555. See Malone, ii. 78, Collier, p. 60, &c. It has been stated we should read x.*s.* at the close of the second paragraph, but the last letter is clearly a *c*, and a comparison with other entries sufficiently proves the correctness of our reading.

† The tracing from which Mr. Knight's fac-simile is taken was not made by Mr. Fairholt, but unfortunately by some person not quite competent to a task which requires peculiar nicety and considerable practice.

same word in a similar position and with the same contraction in a rent-roll of the College of Stratford, 34 Hen. VIII, still preserved in the archives in the council chamber, "Johannes Purs *glover* pro duobus ten. per annum vj.*s.* viij.*d.*" It is thus established, on the best possible evidence, that John Shakespeare, the father of the poet, was a glover in the year 1556.*



He was, however, engaged in other occupations even at this period, for on November 19th, in the same year, we find him bringing an action against Henry Fyld, for unjustly detaining a quantity of barley. In the chamberlain's accounts for 1564, the following entry occurs: "Item, payd to Shakspeyr for a pec tymbur, iij. *s.*" These circumstances lead directly to the conclusion that John Shakespeare was occupied in agricultural pursuits, and in 1579 he seems to have been entirely engaged in them; for in a deed executed in that year he is styled "Johannes Shackspere

* I am quite at a loss to discover on what evidence Mr. Harness founds the singular assertion that there were innumerable John Shakespeares at Stratford in 1556, for there is no entry whatever to be discovered in the Corporation books or church register, showing even two John Shakespeares of that town at so early a period. The shoemaker of that name is not mentioned till many years afterwards, and the reader will find in a subsequent part of this volume how impossible it is that this celebrated entry could have applied to him.

de Stratford uppon Avon in comitatu Warwici *yoman:*" We may now return to Rowe's statement that he was "a considerable dealer in wool", without being accused of violating the probabilities of the case. It was by no means unusual for a burgess of Stratford, in Shakespeare's time, to deal in gloves and wool. In "the trwe inventory of the goodes of Joyce Hobday, late of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwycke, wydowe, decessed, taken the 3. day of Apriell, 1602," we have the following entries in the list of debts:

> George Shacleton oweth for woll, xxiiij.*s.*
> John Edwards oweth for ij. pere of gloves, viij.*d.**

And why should not John Shakespeare have dealt in the commodity which we are told "is the flower and strength, the revenue and bloud of England; a bond uniting the people into societies and fraternities for their own utility; the milk and honey of the grasier, and countreyman; the gold and spices of the West and East India to the merchant and citizen; in a word, the exchequer of wealth, and scepter of protection to them all as well at home as abroad, and therefore of full merit to be had in perpetual remembrance, defence, and encouragement."†

The ancient records of Stratford are so voluminous that we may conclude with tolerable safety the establishment of the Shakespeares in that town did not take place before the middle of the sixteenth century, from the fact of the name not occurring in the archives of the borough previously to that period. The old subsidy rolls do not give us any information respecting them, and the earliest notice of the

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* There is another copy of this inventory which gives these entries rather more fully:—
Inp. George Shacleton oweth me for woll . . . . xxiiij.*s.*
It. Mr. Guttredge oweth me for calves lether . . iiij.*s.* viij.*d.*
John Edwards of Allveston alias Allston oweth me for two pere of gloves viij.*d.*

† The Golden Fleece, by W. S. gent. 12mo, Lond. 1657, p. 2.

Shakespeare family at Stratford-on-Avon was found by Mr. Hunter* in a Court Roll dated April 29th, 1552, preserved in the Carlton Ride Record Office:

Stratford } Visus franci plegii cum cur. illustrissimi principis Domini Edwardi
Burgus. } Sexti, Dei gratia Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ, regis, Fidei defen-
soris, et in terra ecclesiæ Anglicanæ et Hibernicæ supremi capitis, ibidem tent.
xxix° die Aprilis anno regni sui sexto.

Item, [juratores] present. super sacramentum suum quod Humfrudus Reynoldes (xij.*d.*) Adrianus Quyney (xij.*d.*) et Johannes Shakyspere (xij.*d.*) fecerunt sterquinarium in vico vocato Hendley Strete contra ordinationem curiæ. Ideo ipsi in misericordia, ut patet.

We thus find Shakespeare's father living in the very street in which the poet's birthplace is still traditionally pointed out as early as the year 1552. Henley street even in these days is not particularly to be recommended for its beauty or general effect, but at this time John Shakespeare was not the only inhabitant who offended against the local bye-laws, by permitting the accumulation of filth in the public road. It was a very common offence, and one of those most frequently visited by fines in the Stratford court. In 1558, John Shakespeare was fined *four pence* for not keeping his gutters clean,—"Francis Berbage, master baly that now ys, Adreane Quyny, Mr. Hall, Mr. Clopton, for the gutter alonge the chappell in Chappell Lane, John Shakspeyr, for not kepynge of their gutters cleane, they stand amerced." The following orders made at a court held in 1553, exhibit in a very curious manner the state of Stratford at that time, and illustrate the notices of John Shakespeare in the extracts just given.

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* New Illustrations, vol. i. p. 18. Mr. Hunter has not given the extract so fully as I think its curiosity deserves; neither has he stated the repository of the original document, for which I had an unsuccessful search at Stratford, and only found after a variety of inquiries.

Stratford. Cur. viij.to die Octobr: primo a°. Marie primo.

The xij. men do present that Adrean Quyny, William Rosar, Frauncis Arbadge, Thomas Samwell, and John Pyrre, for ther dogges goynge at lardge and not moseled, they ar amersyd in vj.*d.* apece, and that no person from hensffurthe dwellynge within the toune of Stratford suffer hys or ther dogges beynge bandogges in the day tyme to go abrod unmoselyd, and in the nyght to kep them in ther houssez in peyne of forfetynge vj.*s.* viij.*d.* every offendar.

Item, that all and everyche officer and other personcs from hensffurthe be obeydyent unto the hye beyly in peyn of every offender to forfet and losse for every defallt xx.*s.* and that no persone be so hardy to revell or rebell ageynst eny offecer in lyke peyn, and to have iij. days and iij. nyghtes ponyshement in the opon stox.

Item, that no ynhabytaunte dwellynge within this lyberty from hensfurthe receve nor have eny ynmak but only suche persones as shalbe apwntyd and admyttyd by the hy beyly constabull and other thoffcceres and the xij. men, in peyne of every offendor forfet and losse for every offence xx *s.* and ther bodyez to remayne in the open stokes iij. day and iij. nyghtes, and that no housholdar receve eny straunger nor to lodge eny by nyght without a specyall lycence of the hye beyly in lyke peyne.

Item, that no jurneyman prentes nor eny maner servaunt be forthe of ther or his master hous by the nyght after the our of nyne by the clok in peyne of iij. days and iij. nyghtes ponyshement in the open stokes, and to forfet and pay xx.*s.* and that no mane receve eny suche person so offendynge in lyke peyne.

Item, that no man have hys or ther shyp goynge or pasturynge in the bancroft over and above on oure in a day in peyn of every offendor to forfet and losse for every falt xij.*d.* only excepte straungeres for ther bayt, and that no man have eny swyne goynge ther unryngyd in lyke peyne.

Item, that no persone from hensfurthe do dyge eny gravell in Tyncar Lane within viij. footes of the hye way, in peyne of forfetynge for every offence iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Item, that every tenaunt in Chapell lane or Ded lane do scour and kep cleane ther gutteres or dyches in the same lane befor thassencyon day, and so from thensfurthe from tyme to tyme to kepe the same in peyn of every offender to forfet for every deffalt iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* and that every tenaunt do ryd the soyelles in the stretes of logges and blokes ther lyenge and beynge to the noysaunce of the kynges leage people by the same day in lyke peyne.

Item, that Henry Sydnall (xx.*d*) for havynge and kepynge onlauffull bowlynge in hys baksyed he standes amersyd, and that the same Henry Sydnall from hensfurthe have no more bowlynge nor receve nor have eny jurneymen nor menservauntes unlaufully in hys hous in peyn of xx.*s.* and that he amove hys kydfyn which lyethe over the chapell wall gardyn befor thassencyon day and set the same kydfyn at the least a yard from the wall in lyke peyne.

Item, that no toune dwellar excepte he be a comen bacar bak eny bred to syll furthe of his hous in peyn of xx.*s.*

Item, that the hye beyly that now ys four tymez in the yere do ryd and make

cleane his mukhyll and the same honestly be kept in peyn of xx.*s.* and that no other mukhylles be mayntayned kept nor made within the toune but only thos that be appwntyd in lyke peyne.

Item, that the bochares from hensfurth do carry furthe ther garbage after the our of ix. by the clok in the aftornone, and non to be leyed within the toune nother on nor in the dunghylles nor other places, in peyn of every offendor to forfet and losse xx.*s.*

Item, that all bacares bakynge bred for to syll shall syll iiij. loves for a penny ij. loves a penny, a loffe for a penny, and bultyd with a lauffull bulter and syez to be kepte in peyn of every offendor to forfet and losse for every defalt xx.*s.*

Item, that all brwares that shall brwe ale to syll shall syll new ale under the hear syve for ij.*d.* the galon, and xij. galons to the doson and ij.*d.* ob. staell, ij. galons of small drynke for a penny good and wholsum in peyn of every offendor to forfet for every defalt xx.*s.* and that no brwar syll ale furthe by the pot nor set out eny alestak in lyke peyne, and that no person nor persones presume to be a vyttelar or a typlar but only thos that are or shalbe admyttyd or appwyntyd by the kynges justice or offecers in lyke payne of xx.*s.*

Item, that John Henshawe befor thassencyone day do pyche and set the mound bytwen hys ground and Whelares, and he do suffer Whelar to have and enjoy the elme at thupper end of the same mound, in peyn of xx.*s.* and further that John Henshaw do suffer the kynges tenaunt to set and have the mound bytwen the kynges ground and hys ground within on wyk next after the court in lyke peyne.

Item, that no jorneyman craftesman or prentes weyr eny weypon, that ys to say sword, dager, or other weypone, within the toune, uppon peyn of forfetynge the same weypon to be taken from hyme by an offecer, and yf he resyst the offecer then to be ponyshed in the opon stokes by the space of on day and a nyght.

It appears from a deed dated 20th April, 1 and 2 Phil. et Mar. 1555, that John Shakespeare was not then a member of the Corporation of Stratford, and Malone alludes to a document which proves he had not attained that distinction on Michaelmas day, 1557. He was certainly chosen a burgess very shortly after this latter date. On April 30, 1557, he was marked one of the jury of the Court Leet, but not sworn, his name being crossed out in the original record; and he was on a similar jury on September 30th, 1558. In 1557, he was chosen an ale-taster, "an officer appointed in every Court Leet, and sworn to look to the assize and goodness of bread and ale, or beer, within the precincts of

that lordship;" and his name occurs in the registry of the Court of Record as being fined for non-attendance during his occupancy of this office.

Stratford } Curia de recordo ibidem tent. secundo die Junii, annis regnorum
Burgus. } Philippi et Mariæ, &c. tercio et quarto.
viij.*d.* De Johanne Shakysper uno testat. serviciæ burgi, quod quia non venit ad exequendum officium suum pro iij. curiis. Idco in misericordia.

On September 30th, 1558, he was chosen one of the four constables, the circumstance being thus noted in the contemporary record:

The xij. men have orderyd ther trysty and welbelovyd Robert Perot to be bely for one wholl yere now next comynge.
Item, ther trysty and welbelovyd Henry Byddyll capytall alderman (jur).
Item, ther trysty and welbelovyd Humfrey Plymley, Roger Sadler, John Taylor, and John Shakspeyr (jur.), constabulls.

He was again elected constable for another year on October 6th, 1559, and on the same day he was chosen one of the four affeerors appointed to determine the fines for those offences which were punishable arbitrarily, and for which no express penalties were prescribed by statute. This latter office he again filled in 1561, in the September of which year he was elected one of the chamberlains of the borough, an office he held for two years.* On July 4th, 1565, he was chosen an alderman, "at thys hall John Shakspeyr ys appwntyd an alderman;" and from Michaelmas, 1568, to Michaelmas, 1569, he was the high bailiff†

* In a deed relating to "a tenneimente in the Rother strete," called "Roder stret" in the body of the document, dated December 26th, 5 Eliz.—"John Shakspeyre and John Taylere, chaumburlens and capytall burgesez." Another deed dated Jan. 20th, 5 Eliz.—"John Taylor and John Shakspeyr, chamburlcins." We have also "thaccount of John Tayler and John Shakspeyre chamburlens, made the xxiiij.th day of January in the v.th yere of the reigne of [our] sovereign Lady Elyzabeth." An indenture dated 26 Apr. 5 Eliz.—"John Shackspere and John Tayler, chamberleyns;" and a lease dated May 27, 5 Eliz. of a tenement in High street to William Trowte, "John Taylor and John Shakspere, chamberleyns."

† "Mr. John Shakspere hyȝgh balyf," MS. dated Oct. 1st, 1568. "Mr. John Shakyspere hyȝgh balyf," Sept. 7th, 1569. "Mr. John Shakspere, hyȝgh balyf of the sayd burrowe," Jan. 26th, 1569.

of Stratford, thus attaining the chief honour the corporation could bestow. On the 5th of September, 1571, he was elected chief alderman, "Mr. John Shakespere was elected alderman for the yere to come, and ys sworne ut supra, &c."* He continued chief alderman till Sept. 3d, 1572, and thus concludes the account of the local honours shadowed over Shakespeare's father.

As early as 1556, John Shakespeare became the holder of two copyhold estates of inheritance at Stratford, which were alienated to him by George Turnor and Edward West, on October 2d. One of these was situated in Greenhill street, the other in Henley street:

Stratford super Avon. Visus franci plegi cum cur. et session. pacis tent. ibidem secundo die Octobris annis regnorum Philippi et Mariæ, Dei gratia, &c. tercio et quarto.

Item, præsentant quod Georgius Turnor alienavit Johanni Shakespere et hæredibus suis unum tent. cum gardin. et croft. cum pertinentiis in Grenehyll stret,† tent. de domino libere per cartam pro redd. inde domino per annum vj.*d.* et sect. cur. et idem Johannes prædictus in curia fecit domino fidelitatem pro eisdem.

Item, quod Edwardus West alienavit prædicto Johanni Shakespere unum tent. cum gardin. adjacen. in Henley Strete, pro redd. inde domino per annum vj.*d.* et sect. cur. et idem Johannes prædictus in curia fecit fidelitatem.

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* 10 Oct. 13 Eliz. Ad primam aulam Adriani Queny ballivi burgi prædicti ac *Johannis Shakespere cap. aldermanni* ejusdem burgi ibidem tent. *Borough Records.* This was in the year 1571.

† Greenhill street still remains, but not as in those days. At a Court Leet held 3 & 4 Ph. & Mar. was entered "Raf Hylton for hys wyf beyng a hedge brekar, and teryng and carryeng away of Nicholes *hedge at Grenehyll*, and he stands amersyd." This hedge is again mentioned in the following order made Oct. 6, 5 Eliz. 1563:—

Item, that no maner of person nor persons by hym or themselves or any other of [them] or ther famyly do at eny tyme hearafter ley eny donge or muck in the stretes or lanes, but only within severall groundes or uppon the comen dunghyll appwntyd, under the peyne to forfet for every defalt iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* and the tennant that rentythe the ground for sufferynge dung or muk to be leyd uppon hys ground contrary to the ordor prescribid, every suche tenaunt to forfet for hys so sufferyng muk to be so leyd x.*s.* every suche forfettes to be to the use of the chambur of Stratford. Theis donghylles beyng comen donghylles appwntyd hearafter namyd, that ys to say, one at the nether end of Shyp stret, one other at the nether end of Burge stret, one other in the gravell pyttes in Tyncar stret, one other at thupper end of Grenehyll stret by Nycholas lanes hedge in Henley stret, one other donghyll in the old plac accustomyd, one other in Churche lane benethe John Sadlers barne, and all the same sayd commen dunghylles to be ryd twyez in the yere, that ys to say, befor the feest of Pentycost and necr and about Mychelmas, under the peyn xx.*s.* to the use aforsayd.

The purchase of this property, nearly equal in its tenure to freehold, exhibits him as thriving in his occupations. How long he continued to possess it does not anywhere appear, but he probably parted with both estates some years afterwards, for no mention is made of them in any of the numerous documents relating to the Shakespeare property.

John Shakespeare's marriage with Mary Arden took place most probably in 1557. She was unmarried on November 24th, 1556, the date of her father's will, and Joan, her first child, was baptized at Stratford on September 15th, 1558, "Jone Shakspere daughter to John Shakspere." It should, however, be recollected that the baptismal registers of Stratford do not commence till March 1558, so that it is by no means impossible Joan was the second child, and I am inclined to think that Rowe's statement of their having had ten children was founded on substantial information, not from the parish registers. Those who believe in the minute personal application of the sonnets have not found an argument for this assertion;

> That's for thyself to breed another thee,
> Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;
> Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
> If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee.

The following extracts from the registers of Stratford will show the names of the other children, other notices of the name, and some of the connexions of the family.

1. Baptisms, 1562, December 2, Margareta filia Johannis Shakspere. Burials, 1563, April 30, Margareta filia Johannis Shakspere.

2. WILLIAM. Baptisms, 1564, April 26, Gulielmus filius Johannes Shakspere.

3. Baptisms, October 13, 1566, Gilbertus filius Johannis Shakspere. [In the register for burials, Feb. 3, 1611-2, occurs, Gilbertus Shackspeare adolescens. This was perhaps a son. Malone asserts (ii. 615) that the elder Gilbert certainly died before his son. For this I find no authority, no notice of his decease appearing in the registers; but he lived at Stratford, and his signature occurs as a witness to a deed made in 1609. It is sufficiently interesting to be

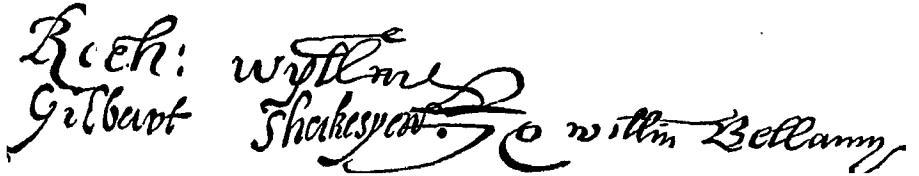
given entire, and the reader will not be displeased to see the autograph of one of Shakespeare's brothers, affording us a genuine example of the name written by one of the family without the elision of the middle *e*.]

Lease from Margery Lord, widow, to her son Richard Smyth alias Courte, butcher, of the site of a chimney in Middle Row.

This indenture made the fiifte daye of Marche in the yeare of our Lorde God one thowsande syxe hundred and nyne, Betwene Margerye Lorde of Stratford uppon Avon in the cowntye of Warwick wyddowe of the one partye, and Richard Smyth alias Courte of the same towne and cowntye, butcher, one of the sonnes of the same Margerye of the other partye, Witnesseth that the said Margerye Lorde for dyvers good causes &c. her thereunto at this present especiallye movinge, and chieflye for and in consideration of the meare zeale and affection which she beareth unto the saide Richard, hath demizedd, graunted, &c. and doth demize &c. unto the said Richard his executors &c. one small piece of grownde whereupon is placed a foundation of stone which beareth and upholdeth a chymneye now in the hall of the dwellinge howse of the said Richard, which said foundation of stone is placed in a taverne or sellar which is parcell of the taverne of the said Richard, scyttuate and beinge in Myddle Rowe of Bridgstreete in Stratford aforesaide, and conteyneth in breadthe and wydnesse the number of three yards or thereabouts; To have and to holde the foresaide peece of grownde which is the foundation of the foresaide chymneye and in the occupation of the said Richarde &c. from the day of the date above-wrytten unto the full ende &c. of ffourescore and nyneteyne yeeres, &c. yeeldinge and payinge duringe the contynewance of this present lease unto the said Margerye Lord her heyres &c. the yearely rent of twoe pence of Englishe corant moneye &c. And the sayde Margerye &c. dothe covenant &c. to the said Richard &c. in manner and forme following, that is to saye, that she the said Margerye now &c. is the very trew and lawfull owner of the saide peece of grownde, and is nowe seised thereof &c. and hath lawfull power &c. to graunte &c. to the said Richard &c. And also the said Margerye &c. doth covenant &c. that it shall be lawfull &c. for the said Richard &c. peaceably &c. to have, holde, occupye &c. during the tearme aforesaide, the foresaide peece of grownde without lett &c. of the said Margerye Lorde, &c. In witnesse &c.

Margery Lord her merke.

Sealed, subscribed and delivered in the presence of



4. Baptisms, 1569, April 15, Jone the daughter of John Shakspere. [This being the second daughter so named, it has been presumed that the former Joan died before this period. She married William Hart of Stratford,* and the baptismal registers mention their children]—1600, Aug. 28, Wilhelmus filius Wilhelmi Hart; 1603, Jun. 5, Maria filia Willielmi Hart; 1605, Julii 24, Thomas filius Willielmi Hart hatter; 1608, Sept. 23, Mychaell sonne to Willyam Hart. Among the burials, 1607, Dec. 17, Mary dawghter to Willyam Hart; 1616, Aprill 17, Will. Hartt hatter. [Joan Hart was buried at Stratford, Nov. 4, 1646. Both Joan and her sons are kindly mentioned in Shakespeare's will. The Harts are the only lineal descendants of the poet who have continued to our times to bear the honour of an origin far more illustrious than the proudest feudal ancestry; yet it offers no satisfaction to trace them to their present recesses. See Hunter's New Illustrations, i. 45.]

5. Baptisms, 1571, Sept. 28, Anna filia Magistri Shakspere. Burials, 1579, April 4, Anne daughter to Mr. John Shakspere. [In the Chamberlain's accounts for 1579 is the following curious entry of the sum of eight-pence having been paid for the bell and pall at the funeral of this child, and it is of some little importance in regard to the question of John Shakespeare's circumstances, as he paid the highest fee found in the list:—]

Item, for the bell and pall for Mr. Shaxpers dawghter, viij *d.*
Item, for the bell for Mr. Trusseles child . iiij.*d.*
Item, for the bell for Mres. Combes . . iiij.*d.*

6. Baptisms, March 11, 1573-4, Richard sonne to Mr John Shakspeer. Burials, Feb. 4, 1612-3, Rich. Shakspeare.

7. Baptisms, May 3, 1580, Edmund sonne to Mr. John Shakspere. [This Edmund was a player, and died in London in December, 1607. See Collier's Memoirs of the Principal Actors in Shakespeare's Plays, Introd. p. 14. There cannot, I think, be much doubt as to the identity of these two, although Oldys mentions one of Shakespeare's younger brothers who was alive many years afterwards.]

8. Baptisms, May 26, 1583, Susanna daughter to William Shakspere. Marriages, Junii 5, 1607, John Hall gentleman and Susanna Shaxspere. Baptisms, 1607-8, Feb. 21, Elizabeth dawghter to John Hall gen. [Dr. Hall died Nov. 25, 1635, and was buried in the chancel of Stratford Church on the following day. Mrs. Hall died on July 11th, 1649, and was buried near her husband on July 16th. Elizabeth, their only daughter, was married in 1626.]

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* There are several notices of him in the Registry of the Court of Record, e. g.—17 Dec. 43 Eliz. Arthurus Ange queritur versus Willielmum Harte in placito debiti. 11 Feb. 43 Eliz. Willielmus Harte defaltum fecit super esson. ad sect. Willielmi Wyett in placito debiti.

Marriages, April 22, 1626, Mr. Thomas Nash to Mrs. Elizabeth Hall.* Baptisms, June 20, 1593, Thomas filius Anthonii Nash gen.* [He was buried with the Shakespeares and Halls, 1647.]

9. Baptisms, Feb. 10, 1583-4, Elizabeth daughter to Antony Shaksper of Hamton.

10. Marriages, Nov. 25, 1584, John Shakspere and Magery Roberts. [This entry relates to Shakespeare the shoemaker.] Burials, Oct. 29, 1587, Margery wife to John Shakspere.

11. Baptisms, Feb. 2, 1584-5, Hamnet and Judeth sonne and daughter to William Shakspere. Burials, Aug. 11, 1596, Hamnet filius William Shakspere.† Marriages, Feb. 10, 1615-6, Tho. Queeny tow Judith Shakspere. Baptisms, Oct. 8, 1587, Richard sonne to Richard Queeny; Feb. 26, 1588-9, Thomas sonne to Richard Queeny; Nov. 23, 1616, Shaksper fillius Thomas Quyny gen. Feb. 9, 1617-8, Richard fillius Thomas Quince. Burials, May 8, 1617, Shakspere fillius Tho. Quyny gent. [He had another son, christened Thomas, in January, 1620. Thomas and Richard died in 1638-9. * Judith Quiny was buried at Stratford, Feb. 9, 1661-2.]

12. Baptisms, March 11, 1588-9, Ursula daughter to John Shakspere; May 24, 1590, Humphrey sonne to John Shakspere; Sept. 21, 1591, Phillippus filius Johannes Shakspere. [These entries are supposed to refer to Shakespeare the shoemaker, the poet's father being usually styled *Mr.* in the register. It should be observed, however, that this distinction does not appear in the records of the Corporation.]

13. Burials, March 6, 1589-90, Thomas Green alias Shakspere.

14. Burials, 1601, Sep. 8, Mr. Johannes Shakspeare; Sept. 9, 1608, Mayry Shaxspere wydowe. [The father and mother of William Shakespeare.]

15. Burials, Aug. 8, 1623, Mrs. Shakspeare. [She died on August 6th, and was buried next to her husband in the chancel of Stratford Church. The entry of her burial in the register under August, 1623, occurs as follows:]

8 { Mrs. Shakspeare.
{ Anna uxor Richardi James.

Mr. Harness supposes both these entries to relate to Mrs. Shakespeare. The conjecture is most improbable, the epitaph in the chancel alone deciding in the negative. The bracket was of course placed there because the two obsequies occurred on the same day.

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* In an undated paper in the Council Chamber at Stratford, mention is made of "Thomas Nasshe, sometyme servaunte to Sir John Huband." Anthony Nash died in 1622, and was buried Nov. 18, Anthonius Nash generosus.

† Malone says in a letter dated 1788, "when I was some years ago at Stratford, the sexton, I think, told me that Shakspeare's only son Samuel [Hamnet], who died in 1596, aged 12, lies buried in the same grave with his mother." The register was lent to Malone in 1788 by the Vicar of Stratford.

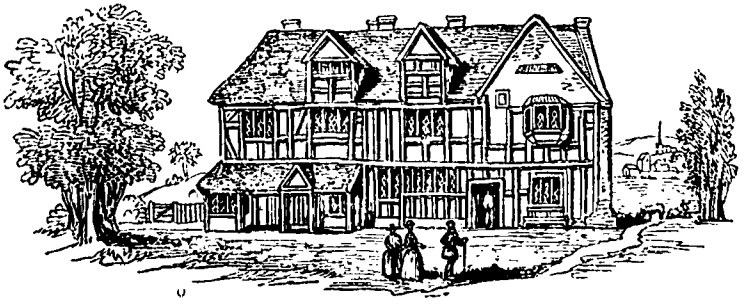
At the time of Shakespeare's birth in 1564, his father was possessed of two copyhold tenements in Stratford, Ashbyes, a farm at Wilmecote, consisting of fifty-six acres exclusive of two houses and two gardens, and his wife's share of property at Snitterfield. He afterwards occupied a farm called Ingon, consisting of about fourteen acres; so that we may fairly conclude he took his station as a yeoman not long after his marriage with Mary Arden, however uncertain it may be how long his dealings in gloves and wool continued. William Shakespeare was baptized at Stratford on April 26th, 1564, a record of as great joy as the announcement of his untimely death on April 23d, 1616, is one of sorrow to all posterity. It is generally said he died on the anniversary of his birth, but this statement rests on a very late tradition,* and had so singular a circumstance occurred, I cannot but think it would have been remarked by some one among those of the seventeenth century who have recorded notices of him, even if it had not been particularly mentioned in his monumental inscription. At the same time it must be remarked that three days was often the period which elapsed between birth and baptism. Arthur Dee was born 13th of July, 1579, and christened on the 16th; Katherine Dee was born 7th of June, 1581, and christened on the 10th; and Theodore Dee was born 28th of February, 1588, and christened on March 1st. On the other hand, we find Margaret Dee was not christened till a fortnight after her birth. These instances are selected from Dr. Dee's Diary, and tend to show there was no great regularity observed in such matters. A font is still shown at Stratford† as having been that in which the poet was

* The earliest authority is Oldys in his MS. notes to Langbaine.

† "Capt. Saunders of Stratford upon Avon died on Friday, July 23, 1830. Captain Saunders, in common with many of the inhabitants of Stratford, had an enthusiastic admiration of everything relating to Shakespeare, and perhaps

baptized, and the new font in the church has, with singularly good taste, been formed in the same style. The former was probably in Stratford Church in Shakespeare's time, but the frequency of domestic baptisms in those days of course renders it somewhat doubtful whether it was used at the poet's christening.

John Shakespeare lived in Henley street* in 1552, and a house is still pointed out in the same street as the birth-place of Shakespeare in 1564.† When tradition is thus partly supported by evidence, not known so early as the former, it is carrying incredulity too far to oppose its dicta. We can safely regard the humble dwelling, now secured to



The Birthplace, from an old drawing in the Brit. Mus.

the country by the praiseworthy efforts of committees formed at Stratford and London, as the earliest home of our great dramatic poet. But this was not the copyhold tenement

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he possessed one of the most authentic articles connected with the bard. In his garden was the fragment of the old font of the church, which Capt. Saunders found in a stonemason's yard at Stratford, and was acknowledged as having been removed from the church."—*Prattinton MSS. in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries.*

* A very old street at Stratford. I find it mentioned in two deeds of 1369 and 1387, in vico qui vocatur Henley stret.

† There was a tradition about the year 1700 that Shakespeare was born near the churchyard. "Where have I read of Shakespear's house bordering upon the churchyard at Stratford in Gildon."—*Oldys, MS. notes to Langbaine.* A house near the river, called the Brook House, now pulled down, was some years since asserted to have been the birthplace of Shakespeare.

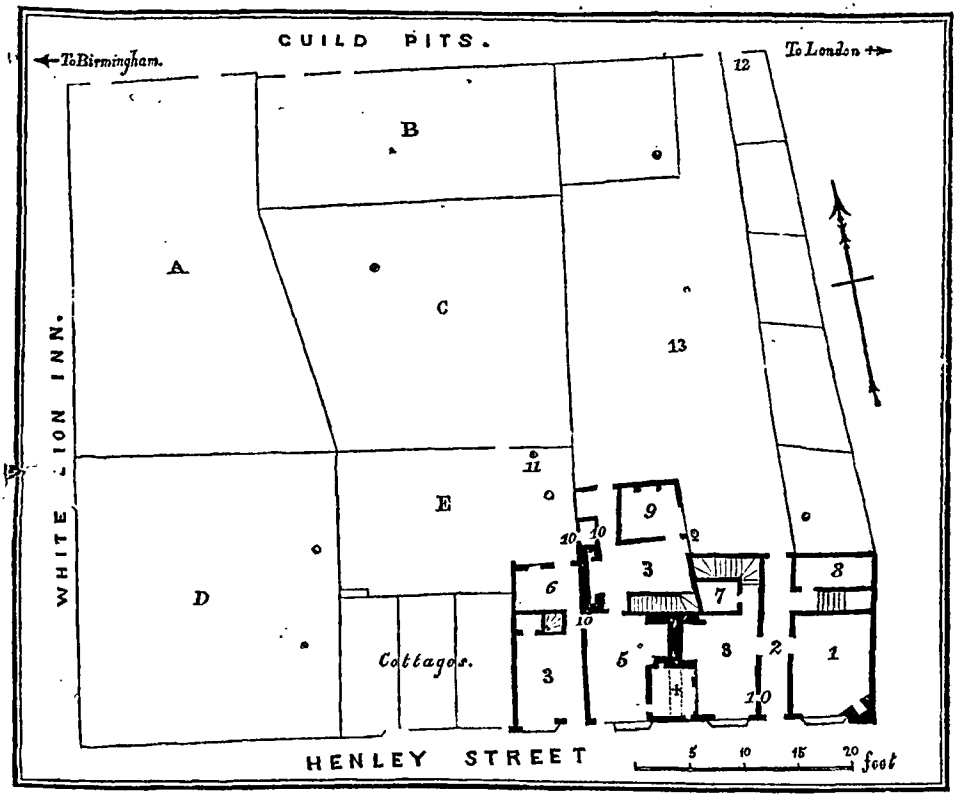
purchased by his father in 1556, which has never been shown to have been his residence. The Shakespeare property in Henley street, on which were situated the two houses purchased by John Shakespeare for £40 in 1575,* is clearly the locality of Shakespeare's youth, and the accompanying fine levied on that occasion describes it as consisting of two messuages, two gardens, and two orchards, with their appurtenances.

Hæc est finalis concordia facta in curia dominæ reginæ apud Westm. a die Sancti Michaelis in unum mensem anno regnor. Elizabeth. Dei gratia Angl. Franc. et Hibern. Reginæ, Fidei defensoris, &c. a conquestu decimo septimo, coram Jacobo Dyer, Ricardo Harpur, Rogero Manwood, et Roberto Mounson, justic. et aliis dominæ reginæ fidelibus tunc ibi præsentibus, inter Johannem Shakespere quer. et Edmundum Hall et Emmam uxorem ejus deforc. de duobus mesuagiis, duobus gardinis, et duobus pomariis, cum pertinentiis, in Stretford super Avon, unde placitum convencionis sum. fuit inter eos in eadem curia, scilicet quod prædicti Edm. et Emma recogn. prædict. ten. cum pertin. esse jus ipsius Johannis ut ill. quæ idem Johannes habet de dono prædictorum Edmundi et Emmæ, et ill. remiser. et quietclam. de ipsis Edmundo et Emma et hæred. suis prædicto Johanni et hæred. suis in perpetuum. Et præterea iidem Edmundus et Emma concesser. pro se et hæred. ipsius Emmæ quod ipsi warant. prædicto Johanni et hæred. suis prædict. ten. cum pertin. contra prædictos Edmundum et Emmam et hæred. ipsius Emmæ in perpetuum. Et pro hac recogn. remissione quietclam. warant. fine et concordia idem Johannes dedit prædictis Edmundo et Emmæ quadraginta libras sterlingorum.

John Shakespeare probably lived in one of these houses till his death; and Joan Hart, Shakespeare's sister, resided there in 1616 and 1639. A deed, bearing date 14 Aug. 33 Eliz. 1591, informs us that George Badger sold to John and William Courte "totum illud messuagium sive tenementum meum cum pertinentiis scituat. jacent. et existen. in Stretford prædicto, in quodam vico ibidem vocato

* This date has always been incorrectly given 1574, but that the purchase was made in the following year clearly appears from the fine above given, as well as from the foot of the fine preserved in the Chapter-House, Westminster. It appears from another fine preserved in the same repository, that Edmund Hall purchased part of this estate from Richard Hill.

PLAN OF THE PROPERTY IN HENLEY STREET ORIGINALLY POSSESSED BY THE SHAKESPEARE FAMILY.



B. Site of the Old Barn, sold to Alderman Payton in 1771.

A. B. C. D. Now belonging to the White Lion Inn.

E. Sold by Thomas Hart to Alderman Payton in 1771. This reference includes the cottages, which were also sold to Payton.

References to the two houses in Henley street, the property of John Shakespeare. 1. Parlour. 2. Passage. 3. 3. 3. Kitchens. 4. Bar of the Inn, which, now termed the Swan and Maidenhead, was originally a dwelling-house. 5. Butcher's shop, now shown as Shakespeare's birthplace, but the cottage to the left (3) was originally part of the house. 6. Buttery. 7. Pantry. 8. Store-room. 9. Back parlour. 10. 10. 10. 10. Doors stopped up. 11. Pump. 12. Gates. 13. Back yard. The above plan is taken from Mr. Wheler's 'Account of the Birth-Place of Shakspeare,' 1824. The partitions which were made of the land originally belonging to this property do not appear to have been correctly identified.

Henley Streete, *inter tenementum Roberti Johnson ex una parte et tenementum Johannis Shakespere ex altera parte.*" In 1597, John Shakespeare parted with a portion of his Henley-street property for the small sum of £2, the land apparently being of very little value in comparison with the house of the latter, and the part marked D in the foregoing plan has been stated to be the portion thus sold, but the deed of conveyance to George Badger distinctly informs us that it was bounded on the north by the Guild Pits. This deed was found very recently in the office of a solicitor at Birmingham, who very kindly, at the request of Mr. Hunt, of Stratford, permitted me to take a transcript of it.* It is not grammatically accurate.

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* The following abstract of this and the deed next mentioned is copied from the original in Mr. Hunt's possession:—

An abstract of the several deeds and writings relating to the title of one part of a messuage or tenement and premises in Stratford upon Avon formerly called the Swann Inn, and now the White Lyon Inn, belonging to Mr. John Payton.

14 Aug. 33 Eliz. Feoffment whereby George Badger sen. of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick, draper, for divers good causes and considerations did give enfeoff deliver and confirm unto John Court of Oldborough in the county of Worcester, yeoman, and William Court of Stratford aforesaid, yeoman, all that messuage or tenement with the appurtenances situate lying and being in Stratford aforesaid in a certain street there called Henley Street *between the house of Robert Johnson on the one part and the house of John Shakespeare on the other part*, with all houses edifices buildings orchards gardens lands tenements hereditaments proffitts and commodities with the appurtenances to the said messuage or tenement belonging; and also two sellions of land containing by estimacion two acres of arrable land lying and being within the field of Stratford aforesaid between the land of Thomas Combe gent. of the one part and the lands of Thomas Raynolds on the other part, To hold to said John Court and William Court and their heirs and assigns for ever to the USE of said George Badger sen. and Alice his wife for their lives and the life of the survivor of them, remainder to George Badger jun. son of said George Badger sen. and the heirs male of his body, remainder to Edward, Richard, William, and Robert Badger, sons of said George Badger sen. one after another, and their heirs male respectively, remainder to the right heirs of said George Badger sen. for ever.

26 Jan. 39 Eliz. Feoffment whereby John Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, yeoman, in consideration of £2 10 0 by said George Badger sen. did bargain sale give deliver and confirm unto said George Badger his heirs and assigns all that toft or parcell of land in Stratford in Henley Street aforesaid, the house of said Shakespeare being on the East part thereof, and the house of said George Badger on the West part thereof, to hold to said George Badger his heirs and assigns. Executed by John Shakespeare, livery and seizin indorsed. [The purchase-money is not correctly given.]

Omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos hoc præsens scriptum pervenerit, Johannes Shakespere de Stretford super Avonam in comitatu Warwici yoman salûtem in Domino sempiternam. Noveritis me præfatum Johannem pro et in consideracione summæ quadraginta solidorum bonæ et legalis monetæ Angliæ mihi per quendam Georgium Badger de Stretford prædict. draper præmanibus solut. unde fateor me fideliter esse solut. et satisfact. dictumque Georgium Badger hæredes executores et administratores suos inde quiet. esse et exonerat. imperpetuum per præsentes, barganizavi et vendidi, necnon dedi et concessi, et hac præsenti carta mea confirmavi præfato Georgio Badger hæredibus et assignatis suis totum illud toftum et parcellum terræ meæ cum pertinentiis jacencium et existen. in Stretford super Avon prædicto, in quodam vico ibidem vocato Henlye Strete, inter liberum tenementum mei prædicti Johannis Shakespere ex parte orientali et liberum tenementum prædicti Georgii Badger ex parte occidentali, continent. in latitudine per æstimacionem dimid. unius virgat. apud utrosque fines, et jacet in longitudine a prædicto vico vocat. Henlye Strete ex parte austral. usque regiam viam ibidem vocatam Gyllpyttes ex parte boreali, continen. per æstimacionem in longitudine viginti et octo virgat. vel circa, et modo est in tenura sive occupatione mei prædicti Johannis Shakespere; habendum et tenendum prædictum toftum et parcellum terræ cum pertinentiis præfato Georgio Badger, hæredibus et assignatis suis, ad solum et proprium opus et usum ejusdem Georgii, hæred. et assign. suorum, imperpetuum, tenendum de capitalibus dominis feod. ill. per servicium inde prius debit. et de jure consuet. Et ego vero prædictus Johannes Shakespere et hæredes mei totum prædictum toftum et parcellum terræ cum pertinentiis præfato Georgio Badger hæredibus et assignatis suis ad opus et usum supradictum contra omnes gentes warrantizabimus et imperpetuum defendemus per præsentes. Sciatis insuper me præfatum Johannem Shakespere plenam et pacificam possessionem et seisinam de et in prædicto tofto et parcello terræ cum pertinentiis præfato Georgio Badger secundum vim, formam, tenorem, et effectum hujus præsentis cartæ meæ inde ei confect. in propria persona mea tradidisse et deliberasse. In cujus rei testimonium huic præsenti scripto meo sigillum meum apposui. Datum vicesimo sexto die Januarii anno regni dominæ nostræ Elizabethæ, Dei gracia Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ reginæ, Fidei defensor. &c. tricesimo nono, 1596.

Signum Shakespere.

Johannis

Sigillat. et deliberat. ac pacifica possessio et seisina de tofto et parcell. terræ infrascript. deliberat. fuit per infra-nominatum Johannem Shakespere infra-scripto Georgio Badger, die et anno infrascripto, secundum formam, tenorem, et effectum hujus præsentis cartæ, in præsencia viz. Richard Lane, Harry Walker, per me Willielmum Courte scriptor. Thomas Loche, Thomas Beseley.

This deed, besides affording the latest known instance of the mark of John Shakespeare, contains most valuable

corroborative evidence in favour of our supposition that he long continued to reside in Henley street. He still held the two tenements before mentioned, which descended to his eldest son William, as heir-at-law, on his dying intestate. One of these tenements now consists of two cottages, one of the latter being shown as Shakespeare's birthplace; this was the residence of John and Joan Shakespeare; the other tenement was the Maidenhead Inn. This is proved by an indenture dated 1647, which mentions "all that messuage or tenement with thappurtenances scituate and beinge in Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in a certen streete there called Henley streete, commonly called or known by the name of the Maidenhead, and now or late in the tenure of John Rutter or his assignes; and all that other messuage or tenement scituate and beinge in Henley streete aforesaid now or late in the tenure of Thomas Hart, and adjoyninge unto the said messuage or tenement called the Maidenhead." In 1639, it had been mentioned as in the occupation of Joan Hart. The Harts subsequently possessed the property under the will of Lady Barnard, and in the course of time the orchards and gardens were alienated from them, and the White Lion Inn has taken up the position, not, however, to the discredit of Shakespeare, for its long galleries furnish separate rooms dedicated to each of the poet's plays. Now can we reasonably expect better evidence for a home not so neglected in its day, but for a century and a half forgotten by the world, and no one near who could foresee the homage of posterity to so humble a temple? It may now have lost its distinctive character as an Elizabethan home; but we have authentic evidence to show what that character was, and it can be restored without affecting in any great degree its value as a contemporary legacy conferred, let us hope, on pilgrims of all nations for centuries yet to come. Let not our poetical sympathies be measured

by the argument of reality. It suffices to know and to feel that the spot was trod by Shakespeare, that there he "prattled poesy in his nurse's arms," and, more than this, that the associations remain and have not been destroyed. The worldly wise will tell us sympathies such as these are visionary, that our interest has arisen solely from our own imaginations, or they will cast the purest relic of the poet on one side, because truly it does not now appear as in his days. To descend to this destroys whatever that is good and noble it is in the power of association to bestow, for eyes will daily glisten at memorials far more changed from what they were—far less like the great originals. Breathe not a whisper to dissipate the solemn thoughts of such a power—tell us not how changeable are the records of men. If there be one spot in old, in historic England, sanctified

Shakespeare's Birthplace, September, 1847

by past association, it is the cottage where the poet of the world passed his youth, where he wooed and won, and encountered the struggles of early life—the birthplace of William Shakespeare.

In the absence of any direct contemporary evidence respecting the early days of Shakespeare, it is a matter of importance to trace the history of his father, the more so because it has been asserted that owing to the circumstances of the latter, his education was in some degree neglected. That John Shakespeare at certain periods of his life found it convenient to raise money on mortgage and occasionally to borrow small sums, must be readily admitted; and the evidence altogether tends to the conclusion that, for some reason not now known, his circumstances did not improve after 1575, in which year, when Shakespeare was eleven, he gave £40 for the two houses in Henley street. But that poverty is shown must not be too readily conceded. And in pursuing this subject, the evidence on which I wish to place fully before the reader, it will be prudent to submit all entries of cases respecting him to be found in the registry of the Court of Record, especially as this has not yet been done, and erroneous conclusions have been arrived at by those who have contented themselves with the brief extracts heretofore given. Unfortunately the registry is deficient from 12 to 26 Eliz. inclusively, a period which would in all probability have furnished several entries of great interest.

Jul. 15, 2 & 3 Phil. et Mar. Ad hanc curiam venit Johannes Shakyspere in propria persona sua, et def. vim et injur. quand. etc. et petit lic. interloquend. hic usque ad proximam curiam, &c. et habet, &c.

Aug. 12, 3 & 4 Phil. et Mar. Ad hanc curiam [venit] Johannes Shakyspere per Thomam Marten consil. ad barr. et petit judicium versus Thomam Siche, quia non protulit actionem quæ habuit versus prædictum Johannem Shakyspere, et habet judicium cum expensis.*

Nov. 19, 3 & 4 Phil. et Mar. Johannes Shakysper queritur versus Henr. Fyld in placito quod reddat ei xviij. quarteria ordei quæ ei injuste detinet, &c.—

* We see from this entry the result of the action against Shakespeare by Siche, quoted at p. 20, was in favour of the former. This was in the year 1556. Mr. Collier, p. 65, says, "the issue of the suit is not known." Hence appears the utility of printing these curious entries at length.

Actio inter Brace et Rawson comittitur Rogero Myller et Johanni Shakysper usque proximam curiam.

Dec. 2; 3 & 4 Phil. et Mar. Actio inter Johannem Shakispere et Henr. Fyld continuatur ex concensu partium usque ad proximam curiam.

Dec. 16, 3 & 4 Phil. et Mar. Actio inter Shakysper et Henr. Fyld continuatur ulterius usque proximam curiam.

Sept. 22, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Ricardum Wagstaff in placito debiti x.*s.*

Oct. 6, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. Richardus Wagstaff esson. ad hunc diem ad sect. Johannis Shakespere in placito debiti &c. per Radulphum Chester.—Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Willielmum Rychardson de placito transgr.

Oct. 20, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. Willielmus Rychardson ad hunc diem comparuit ad sect. Johannis Shakespere, et quer. habet ultimum diem ad narr.—Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Johannem Asshell in placito debiti super demand. xlij.*s.*

Nov. 17, 4 et 5 Phil. & Mar. Ad hanc curiam venit Johannes Asshell in propria persona, et fatetur actionem Johannis Shakspeyr xlij.*s.* et dat. quinque dies dict. deff. ad solvendum dict. solucion. modo et forma sequent. videlicet ad festum Sancti Andreæ Apostoli proximum sequen. hujus curiæ xx.*s.* et ad festum Natalis Dominæ ex tunc prox. sequen. xxij.*s.* et si defect. fiat in parte solucionis vel in toto ad aliquem festum festorum prædictorum quod solvi debeat, quod tunc fiet executio pro toto &c. —— Ad hanc curiam venit Ricardus Wagstaf in propria persona, et fatetur actionem Johannis Shakspeyr, videlicet x.*s.* et dat. octo dies dicto deff. ad solvend. dict. x.*s.* ante festum Natalis Domini prox. sequent. hujus curiæ, ac pro misis et custag. circa cur. etc. x.*d.* et si defect. fiat in parte solutione prædict. vel in toto ad festum prædictum quod solvi debeat, quod tunc fiat executio pro toto &c.

Dec. 1, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. De Willielmo Rychardson pro li. con. cum Johanne Shakespere in placito transgr. Willielmus Wyngfyld traditur in ball. Johanni Shakespere et Johanni West, videlicet prædictus Johannes et Johannes manuceper. pro dicto Willielmo Wyngfyld, quod si contigerit eum convinci in aliqua actione ad sectam Radulphi Cawdrey, quod tunc prædictus Willielmus solvet et contentabit omnia hujusmodi debita et dampna in quibus contigerit eum convinci, aut se prisonæ infra burgum prædictum submittet; alioquin ipsi prædicti Johannes et Johannes manuceper. solvere prædicto Radulpho Cawdrey debita et dampna prædicta pro prædicto Willielmo Wyngfyld.

April. 19, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. Adrianus Quenye et Thomas Knyght quer. versus Johannem Shakespere de placito debiti super demand. vj.*li.*

Maij 6, 4 & 5 Phil. et Mar. Adreanus Quyny et Thomas Knyght pet. distring. versus Johannem Shakspeyr in placito debiti. Willielmus Malpes queritur versus Johannem Shakspeyr in placito debiti super demand. viij.*s.* —Judicium. Ad hanc curiam venit Johannes Shakspeyr et fatetur actionem Adreani Quyny et Thomæ Knyght, videlicet vj.*li.* post cons. per cur. quod q. recuperent debit. prædictum et xvj. *d.* pro mis. et custag. Ideo fiat levari.*

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* Owing to this arrangement, two entries previously made have been cancelled.

Jun. 5, 4 & 5 Phil. & Mar. Willielmus Malpas ad hunc diem petit distr. versus Johannem Shakespere in placito debiti pro viij.*s.*

Jul. 13, 4 & 5 Phil. & Mar. Johannes Shakespere quer. versus Willielmum Malpas in placito debiti et q. petit diem ad narr. usque proximam curiam.

Jul. 27, 5 & 6 Phil. & Mar. De Willielm. Malpas quia non pros. actionem suam versus Johannem Shakespere in placito debiti.

Nov. 9, 5 & 6 Phil. & Mar. Franciscus Herbage queritur versus Johannem Shakespere de placito debiti super demand. x.*s.*

Nov. 23, 1 Eliz. Johannes Shakespere ad hunc diem esson. per Robertum Lock ad sect. Francisci Herbage.

Dec. 21, 1 Eliz. De Francisco Herbage quia non pros. actionem versus Johannem Shakesper in placito debiti.

Feb. 1, 1 Eliz. Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Matheum Bramley de placito debiti.

Feb. 15, 1 Eliz. De Johanne Shakespere quia quod non pros. actionem suam versus Matheum Bramley in placito debiti.

April. 26, 1 Eliz. Adreanus Quyny et Thomas Knyght petunt capias satisfaciend. versus Johannem Shakspeyr pro quinque libris &c. [This was originally entered thus,]—"Adreanus Quyny et Thomas Knyght quer. versus Johannem Shakspeyr de placito debiti super demand. v.*li.* pleg. de pros. Rogerus Sadler et Ricardus Harenton."

Jul. 5, 1 Eliz. Johannes Shakspeyr queritur versus Ricardum Court in placito debiti vj.*s.* viij.*d.*—Johannes Shakspeyr queritur versus Ricardum Court in placito detenc.—Actio continuatur ex assensu partium. Actio inter Johannem Shackspere et Ricardum Court ponitur ad Radulff. Cawdrie et Johannem Ichyver ad audiendum et terminandum aliter ad satisfaciendum ad proximam curiam.

Sept. 20, 1 Eliz. Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Mathew Bromley in placito debiti esson. per Johannem Mars.—Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Aliciam Nevell viduam in placito debiti esson. per Ricardum Sponer.

Oct. 17, 1 Eliz. Pon. in arbitrium. Actio detenc. inter Edwardum Bate quer. et Cristofer Smythe ponitur Ric. Bidill, Johanni Wheler, Ric. Hill, et Johanni Shakspere, ad audiendum et terminandum ante proximam curiam aliter ad certificandum ad dictam curiam, &c.

April. 2, 3 Eliz. Robertus Locke queritur versus Johannem Shackspere in placito debiti.

Jan. 20, 5 Eliz. Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Ricardum Court in placito debiti.

Feb. 3, 5 Eliz. Actio debiti inter Johannem Shackspere et Ricardum Court concord. per arbitrimentum, et dismissa fuit extra curiam.

Sept. 1, 5 Eliz. Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Ricardum Careles in placito debiti.

Sept. 15, 5 Eliz. Dat. est dies Johanni Shakspere usque proximam curiam ad narrandum versus Ricardum Careles in placito debiti.

Jan. 19, 6 Eliz. Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Humfridum Gadcliffe in placito debiti.

Jun. 6, 6 Eliz. Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Humfridum Gadcliffe in placito debiti.

Jul. 5, 6 Eliz. Humfridus Gadcley solempniter exact. ad respond. Johanni Shakspere in placito debiti et non venit; ideo ipse in misericordia. Et dictus Johannes petit proc. de distr. et ei conceditur quod petit.

Jun. 6, 7 Eliz. Johannes Shakspere queritur versus Johannem Mille in placito debiti iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Nov. 2, 11 Eliz. Johannes Shakyspere, Lewes ap Wyllyams, deligantur ex parte Henrici Bragge ad arbitrandum materiam inter eos.

Sept. 1, 27 Eliz. Johannes Yovins queritur versus Thomam Shaxper de placito . . . . . .

Oct. 27, 27 Eliz. Johannes [Browne] queritur versus Johannem Shakspere deff. de placito debiti.

Nov. 10, 27 Eliz. Fiat distr. versus Johannem Shaxpeare ad sect. Johannis Browne in placito debiti.

Nov. 23, 28 Eliz. Fiat alias distr. versus Johannem Shaxpeare ad sect. Johannis Browne in placito debiti.

Jan. 19, 28 Eliz. Ad hunc diem servient. ad clavam burgi præd. retorn. proc. de distr. eis direct. versus Johannem Shackspere ad sect. Johannis Browne, quod præd. Johannes Shackspere nihil habet unde distr. potest. Ideo fiat ca. versus eundem Johannem Shackspere ad sect. prædicti Johannis Browne, si petatur.

Feb. 16, 28 Eliz. Fiat cap. versus Johannem Shaxkspere ad sect. Johannis Browne in placito debiti.

Mar. 2, 28 Eliz. Fiat alias capias versus Johannem Shaxspere ad sect. Johannis Browne in placito debiti.*

Jan. 18, 29 Eliz. Johannes Shaxpere attach. fuit per servient. ad clavem ibidem ad respondend. Nicolao Lane in placito transgr. super casum, et Ricardus Hyll m. pro deff. etc. [Resulting from this suit the following precept was issued against the person of John Shakespeare:—]

Precept. est servient. ad clavem ibidem quod capiant, seu unus eorum capiat, Johannem Shackspere, si etc. et eum salvum &c. ita quod habeant corpus ejus coram ballivo burgi præd. ad proximam curiam de recordo ibidem tenend. ad respondend. Nicolao Lane gen. de placito transgr. super casum, et hoc &c. Datum xxv^to^ Januarii, anno regni Dominæ Elizabethæ, Dei gratia Angliæ, Franciæ et Hiberniæ reginæ, Fidei defensoris, &c. xxix^no^

Feb. 1, 29 Eliz. Nicolaus Lane narr. versus Johannem Shaxpere in placito transgr. super casum et deff. li. lo.

Mar. 1, 29 Eliz. Johannes Shakesper per Willielmum Courte venit &c. et dicit quod non assumpsit præfato Nicolao Lane modo et forma prout præd. Nicholaus versus eum narr.

Mar. 29, 29 Eliz. Johannes Shakesper protulit breve dominæ reginæ

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* In the margin is written, "non sold. per Browne."

de habeas corpus cum causa coram domina regina r. in curia prox. post xviij. Pascæ.

Jun. 20, 30 Eliz. Johannes Shaxpere queritur versus Johannem Tomson in placito debiti.

Jul. 3, 30 Eliz. Continuatur actio inter Johannem Shaxpere quer. et Johannem Tompson deff. ex assensu partium.

Jul. 17, 30 Eliz. De Johanne Shackspere quia non pros.

April. 23, 31 Eliz. Johannes Shakespere queritur versus Willielmum Grene de placito debiti (concord.)

Oct. 22, 31 Eliz. Johannes Shaxpere queritur versus Johannem Tompson in placito debiti.—Johannes Shaxpere queritur versus Ricardum Sutton in placito debiti.

Nov. 10, 31 Eliz. Fiat distr. versus Johannem Tompson ad sect. Johannis Shaxpere in placito debiti; et altera versus Ricardum Sutton in placito debiti.

Nov. 19, 32 Eliz. Johannes Tompson esson. ad sect. Johannis Shaxpere in placito debiti.

Feb. 24, 33 Eliz. Adrianus Quiney, Humffridus Plumley, et Ricardus Hyll quer. versus Johannem Shaxsper in placito debiti.

Mar. 10, 33 Eliz. Fiat distr. versus Johannem Shaxspere ad sect. Adriani Quyney et aliorum in placito debiti.

Mar. 24, 33 Eliz. Fiat capias pro corpore Johannis Shakspere et Ricardi Sponer ad sect. Adriani Quyney, Humffrd. Plumley, et Ricardi Hyll, in placito debiti.

Apr. 7, 33 Eliz. Johannes Shaxspere esson. ad sect. Adriani Quyney et al. in placito debiti.

Apr. 21, 33 Eliz. Johannes Shaxspere defalt. fecit super esson. ad sect. Adriani Quyney et al. in placito debiti.—Johannes Shaxspere queritur versus Thomam West in placito . . . . .—Johannes Shaksper quer. versus Robertum Jones de placito debiti ix.*s.* j.*d.* ob.

Maij 19, 33 Eliz. Actio inter Adrianum Queency et alios quer. versus Johannem Shaksper deff. est in respectu usque proximam curiam.—Thomas West deff. profert hic in cur. unum de le cantheriam ad sect. Johannis Shacksper etc. et finit. est actio.—Robertus Jones comparuit ad actionem Johannis Shaksper quer. de placito debiti &c. quer. petit diem ad narr.—Transgr. super casum, &c. Johannes Shakspere manucepit pro deff. et Thomas Greene m. pro quer.—Johannes Shaxpere queritur versus Robertum Yonge in placito transgr. super casum.—Johannes Shaxpere queritur versus Thomam West in placito transgr. super casum.

Jun. 2, 33 Eliz. Johannes Shaxpere defalt. fecit super esson. ad sect. Adriani Quyney, Humffrd. Plumley, et Ricardi Hylle, in placito debiti.—Johannes Shaxpere narr. versus Robertum Jones in placito debiti.

Jun. 30, 33 Eliz. Robertus Jones nichil dicit ad accionem Johannis Shaxpere in placito debiti. Ideo conc. per cur. quod præd. Johannes recuperet debitum suum præd. et pro misis suis &c.

July 14, 33 Eliz. Henricus Shakspere attachiat. fuit ad sect. Ricardi Ange in placito transgr. super casum et def. r. in prison.

Sept. 22, 33 Eliz. Ricardus Ange narr. versus Henricum Shaxkęspere* in placito transgr. super casum.—Judicium redd. est versus Robertum Jones pro ..... pro misis et cust. Johannis Shaxsper quer. sibi adjudicat. fuerint.

Oct. 20, 33 Eliz. Henricus Shaxspere nichill dicit ad narr. Ricardi Ange in placito transgr. super casum. Ideo fiat precept. ad inquirend. quæ dampn. præd. Ricardus sustinuit accione.—Johannes Shaxspere et Robertus Jones concord. sunt.

Jan. 10, 35 Eliz. Ricardus Tyler queritur versus Johannem Shaxpere in placito debiti.

Jan. 24, 35 Eliz. Fiat distr. versus Johannem Shaxpere ad sect. Ricardi Tyler in placito debiti.

Feb. 21, 35 Eliz. Ricardus Tyler narr. versus Johannem Shaxpere in placito debiti et deff. li. lo.—Johannes Shaxpere attachiat. fuit per servient. ad clavem ibidem ad respondend. Henrico Wilson in placito transgr.

Mar. 21, 35 Eliz. Johannes Shaxpere nichill dicit ad actionem Ricardi Tyler in placito debiti.

Mar. 19, 37 Eliz. Idem [Adrianus Quyney] versus Philippum Grene; *chaundeler*, Henricum Rogers, *butcher*, et Johannem Shaxspere, in placito debiti v.*li.*

This last entry, dated 1595, contains the latest mention of Shakespeare's father in the registry of the Court of Record, and is in itself a proof that he was engaged in no craft at that period. Had he been a glover, or any other trade of the kind, it is impossible not to conclude that it would have been so inserted in the registry, the callings of the other two defendants being particularized; and we may safely infer that the reason we find in no case after that of 1556 the trade of John Shakespeare noticed, is the most probable fact that, becoming a yeoman not many years after his marriage, he relinquished his retail trade, and afterwards occupied himself chiefly in agricultural matters. It should be added, that in the action here mentioned, Adrian Quiney proceeded afterwards against the other defendants, omitting John Shakespeare; so that probably he settled whatever claim was preferred against him; but the pleas or declara-

* I do not remember this form of the name elsewhere. The present entry relates to John Shakespeare's brother.

tions having been preserved in very few instances, we are unfortunately without the means of ascertaining the precise nature of most of the transactions alluded to in the above notices. The following plea is one of the few that remain, and refers to the cause brought by Lane against John Shakespeare, 1 Mar. 29 Eliz.:

Stratford } Et prædictus Johannes Shakesper per Willielmum Court attorn.
Burgus. } suum venit, et defend. vim et injuriam quando &c. Et dicit quod prædictus Nicholaus Lane actionem suam inde versus eum habere non debet, quia dicit quod narracio prædicti Nicholai minus sufficiens in lege existit, ad quam ipse necesse non habet, nec per legem terræ tenetur, respondere; protestando quod prædictus Henricus Shakesper in narracione ipsius Nicholai specificat. per scriptum suum obligat. concessisset se teneri præfat. Nicholao Lane in . . . . . libris pro solucione viginti duarum librarum, viz. in festo Sancti Michaelis archangeli ult. præterit. debit. modo decem librar. et in festo Sancti Michaelis archangeli ex tunc prox. futur. duodecim libras de prædictis viginti et duarum librarum resid. et non cognoscend. aliqua in narracione prædicti Nicholai fore vera, sed pro placito idem Johannes Shakesper dicit quod prædictus Nicholaus Lane non solvebat præfat. Johanni Shakesper quatuor denarios legal. &c. in consideracione assumpcionis et promissionis dicti Johannis; ac salvis sibi omnibus advantagiis tam ad narrationem quam ad querelam prædicti Nicholai dicit ulterius quod ipse non assumpsit modo et forma prout idem Nicholaus Lane in narracione sua prædicta superius versus eum narravit. Et de hoc ponit se super patriam &c.

The preceding document refers to the same action as the plea of Nicholas Lane, printed at p. 9; but the reader must be warned from these, which might appear in the brief record as conveying inferences against the prosperity of John Shakespeare's circumstances, but which do not when thus exhibited in particulars, that he cannot safely use these entries *in every case* as a history of his pecuniary affairs. The ancient forms of process in actions of debt must also be considered, and it will, I think, be found that even the most formidable circumstance which is entered under the date of Jan. 19, 1586, "quod prædictus Johannes Shackspere nihil habet unde distringi potest," must be construed in a great measure by legal formality, not necessarily as an

actual fact. On Feb. 16th we find a *capias* issued against John Shakespeare, and on March 2d an *alias capias*, but the marginal note to the entry of the latter seems to imply that the debt after all was not discharged. When the return was made in January, that John Shakespeare had no goods on which distraint could be made, there can be little doubt of the fact that he was keeping himself out of the way of the service of a process; and on March 29, 29 Eliz. 1587, when mention is made of his producing a writ of habeas corpus, we can conclude with tolerable certainty that he was in custody or imprisoned for debt. When we compare these facts with the probable date of Shakespeare's removal to London, it will, I think, be found to raise a strong probability in favour of the supposition that the circumstances of the family had some relation with that important step in the poet's life.

Shakespeare was born in 1564; and the Chamberlains' accounts for that year exhibit his father in a creditable social position, and selling to the corporation "a pec tymbur," probably from his estate of Ashbies. The apparent smallness of the sum will not create surprise, when the value of money at that period is taken into consideration, and when we find the corporation being indebted to him in the sum of £1 5*s.* 8*d.*, we may safely conclude that his pecuniary affairs were not doubtful.

Thaccompt of John Tayler and John Shakspeyr, chamburlens, made the x.th day of January in the syxte yere of the reigne of our sovereigne lady Elyzabethe, by the grace of God quene of Englond, Fraunce, and Irelond, Defender of the feythe, &c. ut sequitur.

Item, payd for makyng yrons for the gret bell - -	ij.*s.*
Item, payd to Shakspeyr for a pec tymbur - -	iij.*s.*
Item, paid the scollmaster - - - -	xvj.*li.*
Item, payd for defasyng ymage in the chappell - -	ij.*s.*
Item, payd for carryeng tymber to the pynfeld - -	viij.*d.*
Item, payd for kepyng the clokkes - -	xvj.*s.*
Item, payd to Alen for techyng the chylder - -	iiij.*li.*

anno prædicto.

Stratford. At a hall ther holdon the xxvj^{t} day of January anno prædicto, the chambur ys ffound in arerage and in dept unto Lews ap William, xxvj.*s.*vij.*d.*

Item, at the same hall the chambur ys found in arrerage and ys in det unto John Shakspeyre - - - - - - xxv.*s.*viij.*d.*

And in a similar account for 1565,—

Item, payd to Shakspeyr for a rest of old det - iij.*li.* ij.*s.* vij.*d.* ob.

In this accompt the chambur ys in det unto John Shakspeyr to be payd unto hym by the next chamburlens - - - - vij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

We have good evidence of his position in the year of Shakespeare's birth in a list of contributions paid towards the relief of the poor. Being then only a burgess, not an alderman, he appears as a donor of twelve-pence, the second in amount in the list of subscriptions of the burgesses. This document has hitherto been printed with such extraordinary inaccuracy, Malone's copy containing nearly forty errors, that I here give it at length from the original MS. in the council chamber at Stratford.

At the hall holldyn in oure garden, the 30. daye of Auguste, a^{o} 1564, moneye paid towardes the releeff of the povre.

Mr. Baylye, iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Mr. Alderman, ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
Mr. Smythe, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Mr. Jefferes, xij.*d.*
Mr. Caudre, ij.*s.*
Mr. Adryan Quine, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Mr. Lewes, ij.*s.*
Rycharde Hylle, ij.*s.*
John Weler, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Robarte Brate, vj.*d.*
Mr. Parot, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Mr. Plumley, ij.*s.*
Mr. Botte, iiij.*s.*

Jhon Tayler, viij.*d.*
Jhon Shacksper, xij.*d.*
Jhon Lewes, viij.*d.*
Jhon Sadler, vij.*d.*
Jhon Hychacre, xvj.*d.*
Willm. Tyller, xij.*d.*
Wm. Smyth, habberdasser, xij.*d.*
Wm. Smyth, corvesar, iiij.*d.*
Jhon Belle, xij.*d.*
Wm. Brace, ij.*s.*
Thomas Dyxun, viij.*d.*
Thomas Dyer, ij.*s.*
Rychard Symons, ... vij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

On Sept. 6th the bailiff and six aldermen gave twelve-pence each "to the relief of those that be visited," and John Shakespeare gave six-pence; and on Sept. 27th another

donation followed, nearly in the same proportion, John Shakespeare again giving sixpence; and on Oct. 20th he gave eightpence. This was on account of the plague, which visited Stratford in 1564, and was the reason of the hall just mentioned being "holldyn in oure garden." Thus infectious pestilence surrounded the dwelling of the child whose destiny it was to place English literature at the summit of all literature, and to be a chief agent in the future mental advancement of his race. Thousands yet unborn will breathe their fervent thanks that the lowly roof in Henley street was one of the favoured spots where the hand of the destroying angel was stayed.

We have already seen that John Shakespeare was now (1564) possessed of a landed estate and valuable property at Stratford, and in 1570 we find him in the occupation of a small farm, called Ingon Meadow, at the annual rent of £8, "and also one other meadowe* with thappurtenaunces called or knowen by the name of Ingon alias Ington meadowe, conteynynge by estimacion fouretene acres, be it more or lesse, then or late in the tenure or occupacion of John Shaxpere or his assignes." He had not been long a tenant of this property, for it appears from an indenture, made May 30, 1568, that it was not then in his occupation. In 1575 he purchased the Henley-street property, and after that period we find him on the other side of the account,

* Malone incorrectly reads *freehold*. The indenture is enrolled in the Rolls Chapel, Rot. Claus. 23 Eliz. par. 10. This Ingon seems to be the same with *Ingon Grove*, mentioned in the following abstract of a deed, dated 1667, in Mr. Hunt's possession:—"And also all those three arrable or pasture grounds situate in Ingon, alias Incton, in the parish of Hampton Episcopi, alias Hampton Lucy, commonly called Ingon Grounds, or Ingon Grove, with their appurtenances, containing twenty-four acres, then in the tenure of Francis Oldfield or his assigns; and also all those three closes of meadow or pasture ground in Ingon alias Incton aforesaid, in the said parish of Hampton Episcopi, otherwise Hampton Lucy, called Parson's Closes, containing twenty-five acres, then in the tenure of Francis Oldfield, and all priviledges, commodities, &c."

selling and mortgaging. The first evidence of this is in 1578, when Shakespeare was fourteen. Dates are now important, for Rowe tells us "he had bred him for some time at a free-school, where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was master of: but the narrowness of his circumstances, and the want of his assistance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language." This statement is well confirmed by the evidence I am about to submit to the reader's careful attention. Perhaps the word *forced* should be written *induced*. John Shakespeare's circumstances began to fail him when William was about fourteen, and he then withdrew him from the grammar-school, for the purpose of obtaining his assistance in his agricultural pursuits. The entries in the registry of the Court of Record show that John Shakespeare's transactions were numerous, necessarily requiring constant attention and vigilance. The following notices are taken from the records of the proceedings of the corporation of Stratford:*

January 29, 1577-8.

Burgus Stratford. } Ad aulam ibidem tent. xxix° die Januárii, a° regni dominæ Elizabethæ reginæ nostræ &c. vicesimo.

At this hall yt ys agreed that every alderman except suche underwrytten excepted, shall paye towardes the furniture of thre pikemen, ij. billmen, and one archer, vj.*s.* viij.*d.* and every burgese, except suche underwrytten excepted, shall pay iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Mr. Plumley, v.*s.*
Mr. Shaxpeare, iij.*s.* iv.*d.* } Aldermen.
John Walker, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Robert Bratt, nothinge in this place.
Thomas Brogden, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
William Brace, ij.*s.*
Anthony Tanner, ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Summa, vj.*li.* xiiij.*d.*

* These have been printed, but, as usual, very incorrectly. In the first two, Malone makes thirty-one errors, and Mr. Knight, who professes in this instance to see the value of accuracy in such matters, and to correct his predecessors, falls into twenty-six!

The inhabitantes of every ward are taxed at this hall as by notes to them delivered yt may appeare.

November 19, 1578.

Ad aulam ibidem tent. xix° die Novembris anno regni dominæ Elizabeth. reginæ nostræ, &c. xxj°

Item, yt ys ordened that every alderman shall payē weekely towardes the relief of the poore iiij.*d.* savinge Mr. John Shaxpeare, and Mr. Robert Bratt, who shall not be taxed to pay anythinge. Mr. Lewes and Mr. Plumley are taxed to paye weekely, eyther of them iij.*d.*,* and every burgeses are taxed weekely at ij.*d.* apece.

In an account of money levied on the inhabitants in the following year, March 11th, 1579, for the purchase of armour and defensive weapons, the name of John Shakespeare is found amongst the defaulters:

John Tonge, iiij.*d.* George Badger, xij.*d.* Thomas Ward, vj.*d.* Mr. Shaxpeare, iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* Mr. Nashe, iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* Mr. Reynoldes, iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* William Brokes, ij.*s.* Bazill Burdet, iiij.*d.* Hugh Pyggin, ij.*d.* Widow Bell, iiij.*d.*	These somes are unpayd and unaccompted for.

This class of evidence may be concluded with an entry found by Malone in a list of debts due to Roger Sadler, a baker of Stratford, appended to his will, dated Nov. 14, 1578, and proved Jan. 17, 1580: "Item of Edmonde Lambarte and . . . Cornishe for the debte of Mr. John Shaksper, v.*li.*"

The effect of this note will be seen much better by extracting the entire schedule of debts from Sadler's will, preserved in the Prerogative Office, Malone having only given partial extracts:

* *Apece* was originally inserted here, but was subsequently erased.

Debtes which are owinge unto me Roger Saddeler.

Inprimis, of Mr. John Combes thelder for a horsse - three poundes.
Item, of the same John Combes due to me by bonde at Christmas next, twentie poundes.
Item, of Mr. Lewis ap Williams which he oweth me - three poundes.
Item, of Richard Hathewaye alias Gardyner of Shotterey, six poundes, viij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, of Willyam Coxe of Syllehull - - tenne poundes.
Item, of Mr. Michaell Gotheridge which he oweth me - twentie shillinges.
Item, that George Merrell, of Ailston, which he doth owe me, vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, of Mr. Thomas Trussell which he oweth me - xxiiij.*s.*
Item, of Richarde ffroste in money and corne - foure poundes.
Item, of Edmonde Lambarte and . . . Cornishe for the debte of Mr. John Shaksper - - - - - - - v.*li.*
Item, of Mr. Walter Roche which I must paye over unto my brother Skydmore for a mare - - - - - - iiij.*li.*

If Edmund Lambert, who was connected by marriage with Mary Shakespeare, paid this sum for John Shakespeare, it may be included in the "certayne other money which they did owe unto him for other matters," mentioned in the Chancery records of 1597, hereafter printed. The first two entries are summarily despatched by Mr. Knight, who, coupling John Shakespeare and Robert Bratt together, and guided by the entry, *nothinge in this place*, attached to the name of the latter, dismisses them at once as no evidences of his poverty.

There is, indeed, so much uncertainty in reasoning on indications such as these, which might have been caused by a variety of circumstances, that I cannot think they prove the distress attributed to John Shakespeare by Malone; and when we find him in 1579 burying a very young child with more expense than was absolutely required (see p. 30), we are led to conclude that his position was by no means so hazardous as has been represented.

There is, however, quite sufficient evidence to show that from the year 1578 the state of his property deteriorated.

In the spring of that year, John and Mary Shakespeare mortgaged their estate of Ashbies to Edmund Lambert for the sum of £40. The original fine, afterwards levied on this occasion according to law, is now for the first time printed from the bundle of Easter Term, 21 Eliz. (1579), in the Chapter House:

Inter Edmundum Lambert quer. et Johannem Shakespere et Mariam uxorem ejus deforc. de duobus mesuagiis duobus gardinis quinquaginta acris terræ duabus acris prati quatuor acris pasturæ et communa pasturæ pro omnimodis averiis cum pertinentiis in Awston Cawntlett. Unde placitum convencionis sum. fuit inter eos &c. scilicet quod prædicti Johannes et Maria recogn. prædicta ten. et communam pasturæ cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius Edmundi, ut ill. quæ idem Edmundus habet de dono prædictorum Johannis et Mariæ, et ill. remiserunt et quietclam. de ipsis Johanne et Maria et hæredibus suis prædicto Edmundo et hæredibus suis in perpetuum. Et præterea iidem Johannes et Maria concesserunt per se et hæred. ipsius Mariæ quod ipsi warant. prædicto Edmundo et hæredibus suis prædicta ten. et communam pasturæ cum pertin. contra prædictos Johannem et Mariam et hæredes ipsius Mariæ in perpetuum. Et pro hac recogn. remissione quietclam. warant. fine &c. idem Edmundus dedit prædictis Johanni et Mariæ quadraginta libras sterlingorum.

The following note of a fine, also printed for the first time from the same repository of records, exhibits Shakespeare's parents interested in other land at Wilmecote, and its importance and curiosity in developing the history of their circumstances at this period will be at once perceived. It will be difficult to say exactly what particular property is referred to, but it clearly exhibits a further extension of the county interests of John and Mary Shakespeare, beyond what has been yet supposed. It refers to their interest in a considerable landed estate at Wilmecote, so that there must, in all probability, have been some deed executed before 1556, giving Mary Arden shares of property in that hamlet.

Inter Thomam Webbe et Humfridum Hooper quer. et Johannem Shakespere et Mariam uxorem ejus, et Georgium Gybbes, deforc. de septuaginta acris terræ, sex acris prati, decem acris pasturæ, et communa pasturæ pro omnimodis averiis, cum pertinentiis in Wylmecote, unde placitum convencionis summonitum fuit inter eos, &c., scilicet, quod prædicti Johannes et Maria et Georgius recogn.

prædicta ten. et communam pasturæ cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius Thomæ ut illa quæ iidem Thomas et Humfridus habent de dono prædictorum Johannis et Mariæ et Georgii, et ill. remiserunt et quietclam. de ipsis Johanne et Maria et Georgio et hæredibus suis, prædictis Thomæ et Humfrido et hæredibus ipsius Thomæ in perpetuum. Et præterea iidem Johannes et Maria concesserunt pro se et hæredibus ipsius Mariæ quod ipsi warant. prædictis Thomæ et Humfrido et hæredibus ipsius Thomæ prædicta tenementa et communam pasturæ cum pertinentiis contra omnes homines in perpetuum. Et pro hac recogn. remissione quietaclam. warant. fine &c. iidem Thomas et Humfridus concesserunt prædicto Georgio prædicta tenementa et communam pasturæ cum pertinentiis; et ill. ei reddiderunt &c. habendum et tenendum eidem Georgio a festo sancti Michaelis Archangeli quod erit in anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo et octogesimo usque finem termini viginti et unius annorum ex tunc prox. sequen. et plenarie complend. reddend. inde annuatim prædictis Thomæ et Humfrido et hæredibus ipsius Thomæ medietatem unius quarterii tritici et medietatem unius quarterii ordei ad festum Natalis Domini annuatim solvend. Et si contingat prædictum redditum medietatis unius quarterii tritici et medietatis unius quarterii ordei aut aliquam inde parcellam a retro fore in parte vel in toto post festum prædictum quo (ut præfertur) solvi debeat non solut. per spacium viginti dierum, quod tunc bene licebit prædictis Thomæ et Humfrido et hæredibus ipsius Thomæ in prædicta tenementa et communam pasturæ cum pertinentiis intrare et distringere, districcione sic ibidem capt. et habit. licite abducere, asportare, et effugare, ac penes se retinere quousque de prædicto redditu medietatis unius quarterii tritici et medietatis unius quarterii ordei cum arreragiis ejusdem, si quæ fuerint, plenar. fuerit satisfactum et per solutum. Concesserunt eciam prædicti Thomas et Humfridus prædictis Johanni et Mariæ revercionem ten. et communæ pasturæ prædictorum cum pertinentiis, ac prædictum redditum superius reservatum, et illa eis reddiderunt &c. habendum et tenendum eisdem Johanni et Mariæ et hæredibus ipsius Mariæ de capitalibus dominis feodi illius per servicia quæ ad prædicta ten. et communam pasturæ pertinent in perpetuum. [Term. Hill. 21 Eliz. 1579.]

The same eventful year, 1579, finds John and Mary Shakespeare selling some of their property in Snitterfield, or rather their interest in it, to Robert Webbe,* for the sum of £4. The deed, which is mentioned by Mr. Collier, is here for the first time printed:

This indenture made the fyftenthe daye of Octobar in the yeare of the raigne of our soveraigne ladye Elizabethe bye the grace of God of England, Fraunce and

* There was a person of this name at Shotterey. A note to the will of John Cocks, of Stratford-upon-Avon, dated May 27th, 1600, says, "Robert Webb of Shottre oweth me iiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* lent hym in money for making ix. strycke and a half of malt."

Ireland Quene, defendor of the faithe, &c. the twentythe and one, Betwene John Shackspere of Stratford upon Avon in the countye of Warwicke yoman and Marye his wyeffe on the one partye, and Robert Webbe of Snytterfylde in the same countye yoman on the other partye, Witnessethe that the said John Shackspere and Marye his wieffe, for and in consideracion of the somme of foure pounds of good and lawfull Englishe money by the aforesaid Roberte Webbe unto the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe before the delyverie of these presents well and trulye contented and paied, of the which said somme the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe doe acknowledge themselves fully satisfyed contented and paied, and thereof and of everye parte thereof the said . . . . his heires executors administrators and assignes doe fully freely and cleerelye acquyte exonerate and discharge for ever, by these presents have gyven graunted bargayned and sold, and by these presents doe gyve graunte bargayne and sell, unto the said Robarte Webbe his heires and assignes for ever, all that theire moitye parte and partes, be yt more or lesse, of and in twoo messuages or tenements with thappurtenaunces, sett lyenge and beynge in Snitterfield aforesaid in the said county of Warwicke, and of all and singular houses edifices barnes stables gardens orchards medowes lesues pastures feedings commons furzes brushewoods underwoods waters lands tenements hereditaments profytts commodyties whatsoever or wheresoever in any wise to the said twoo messuages or tenements or any of them belonginge or appertaininge or occupied with the same, in whose tenure or occupacion soever they or any of them or any parte or parcell of them nowe be. And furthermore, the revertion and revertions, remainder and remainders of the same, and the rents dutyes profytts and commodyties whatsoever to the said revertion or revertions remaynder or remaynders in any wyse belonging incident or appleyinge, or excepted or reserved uppon any manner of graunte or demyse thereof heretofore had or made or of any of thaforesaid premisses, together with all and singular deeds charters evydences wrytyngs and muniments whatsoever towchinge and concerninge onely the foresaid twoo messuages or tenementes, or all or any of thaforesaid premisses which theye thaforesaid John Shackspere or Marye his wyeffe or eyther of them or anye other person or persons, eyther by theyre or any of theyre delyverie or by theire or eyther of theire knowledge, now have or ought to have. To have and to holde theire said moitye parte and partes of the said twoo messuages or tenementes, and of all and singular the graunted premisses, with theire and everye of thappurtenaunces, unto thaforesaide Roberte Webbe his heires and assignes for ever, to his and theire onely proper use and behoofe; all which theire said moitye parte and partes of the said twoo messuages or tenements with thappurtenaunces, and of all and singular the graunted premisses with theire and everye of theire appurtenaunces, thafforesaid John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe, for them and theire heires and the heires of eyther of them, by these presents to thafforesaid Robert Webbe his heires and assignes doe warrante and promysse to defende against the said John and Marye his wiffe and their heires and the heires of eyther of them for ever by these presents. And the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe, for the consideracion aforesaid, for them theire heires and the heyres of eyther of

them, theire executors administrators and assignes, and everye of them, doe covenant promysse and graunte to and with the said Robert Webbe his heires executors administrators and assignes and everye of them by these presents, that theire said moitye parte and partes of thafforesaid twoo messuages or tenements and of all and singular the graunted premisses with their appurtenaunces at all tyme and tymes henceforth after the delyverie of these presents maye and shall lawfully and rightfully come be and remayne unto thafforesaid Robert Webbe his heires and assignes, accordinge to the true tenour and effecte of the graunte thereof before made in these presents, free cleere and voyde or otherwise well and sufficientlie saved harmlesse by the foresaid John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe, theire heires and the heires of eyther of them and their assignes, of and from all and singular bargaines sales feoffmentes grauntes intayles joyntures dowars leases wills uses rent-charge rent-sects arrerages of rents recognizaunce statute marchant and of the staple obligacions judgments executions condempnacions yssues fynes amercements intrusions forfaitures alienacions without lycense, and of and from all other charges troubles and incumbrances whatsoever heretofore had made or done by the foresaid John Shackspere and Marye his wieffe or eyther of them, or of theire heires or the heires of eyther of them, or by any other person or persons by thorough or under theire or any of theire right tytle or interest acte consent or procurement (the rents customes and services due to the chieffe-lord or lords of the fee or fees onely excepted and foreprised), And that theye the foresaid John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe and all and everye other person or persons (except before excepted) nowe havinge, claiminge or pretendinge to have, or that hereafter shall have claime or pretend to have any manner of lawfull and just right tytle and interest of in to or out of theire said moitye parte and partes of the foresaid twoo messuages or tenements, and of all or any of the graunted premisses with theire appurtenaunces, in by or thoroughe the right tytle or intereste of the said John Shakspeare and Marye his wyeffe and theire heires and the heires of eyther of them, at all tyme and tymes hereafter from and after the delyverie of these presentes from tyme to tyme uppon lawfull warninge and request made by the said Roberte Webbe his heirs and assignes unto thaforesaid John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe and theire heires and the heires of eyther of them, at the proper costes and charges in the lawe of the said Robert Webbe his heires or assignes, shall and wyll doe cause and suffer to be done all and everye reasonable and lawfull acte and actes, thinge and thinges, devyse and devyses, for the more better and perfect assuraunce and sure makinge in the lawe of thaforesaid moitye parte and partes of the said twoo messuages or tenements and of all and singular the graunted premisses with theire appurtenaunces to the said Robert Webbe, his heires and assignes, to his and theire onely use and behoofe, be yt by fyne feoffment recovery with single or double voucher deedes inrolled inrollement of those presents, or by any or by all of them, or by any other wayes or meanes whatsoever, with warranty against them the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe and theire heires, and the heires of eyther of them, as shalbe advised or devised by the said Robert Webbe, his heires and assignes, or by his and theire

councell learned in the lawe. And furthermore that the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe and theire heires, and the heires of eyther of them and theire assignes, shall and wyll delyver uncanceled and undefaced unto the said Roberte Webbe his heires or assignes, before the feast of Easter next ensueing the date of these presentes, all and singular the charters deedes evidences wrytinges and myniments which theye said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe hath, or that theye theire heires executors or assignes at any tyme hereafter maye lawfully come by, without suite in lawe, towchinge and concerninge thaforesaid twoo messuages or tenements or the before bargained premisses or any of them, they the said John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe or one of them uppon lawfull request of the said Robert Webbe his heires and assignes, at his and theire proper costes and charges unto them the said John and Marye theire heires and assignes had and made, shall deliver or cause to be delyvered to the said Robart Webbe his heires and assignes the true and perfecte coppie and coppies at all tyme and tymes hereafter. In wittnesse whereof the partyes abovesaid to these present indentures interchangeblie have putte theire hands and seales the daye and yeare fyrst above wrytten.

The marke of John Shackspere

The marke of Marye Shacksper.

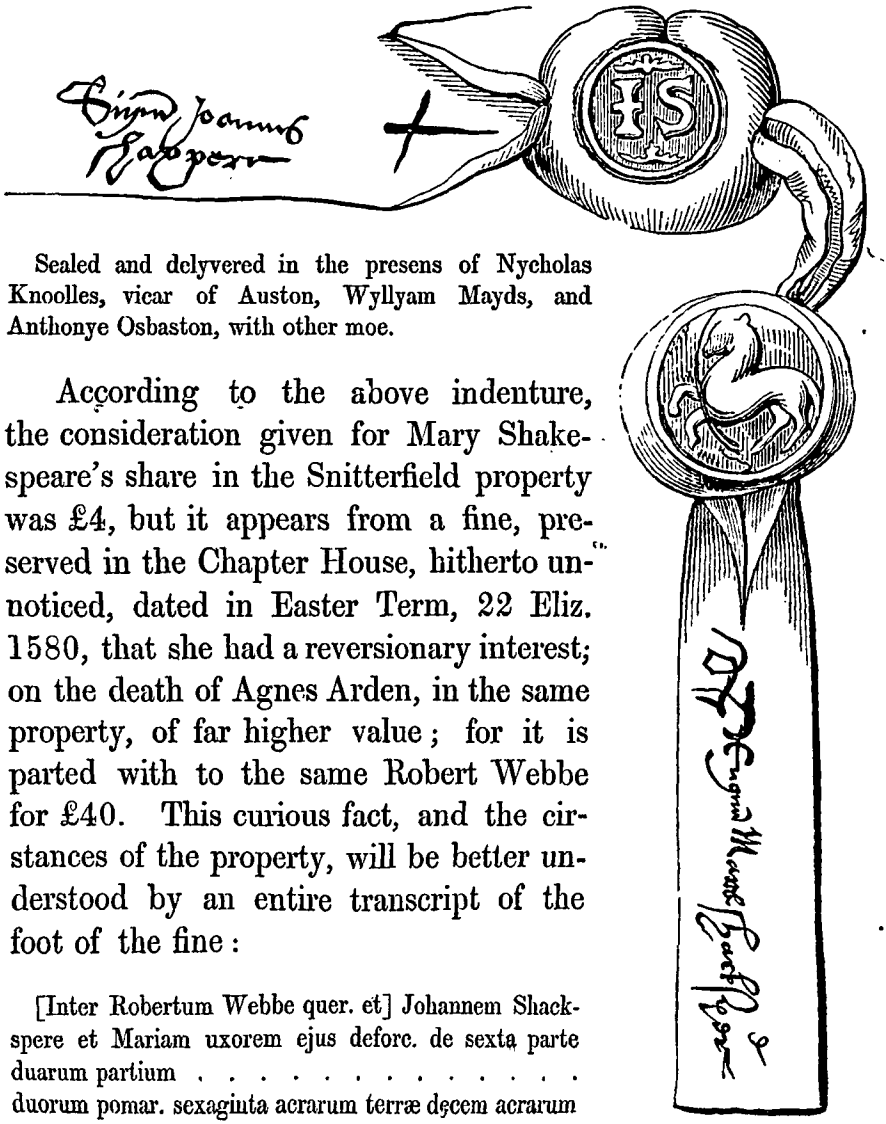
Sealed and delivered in the presens of Nycholas Knoolcs, vicar of Auston, of Wyllyam Maydes, and Anthony Osbaston, with other moe.

This curious document is accompanied by the following bond for the performance of the foregoing covenants, and to both of them the reader will see appended the marks of Shakespeare's parents:

Noverint universi per præsentes nos Johannem Shackspere de Stratford uppon Avon in com. Warwici yoman et Mariam uxor. ejus teneri et firmiter obligari Roberto Webbe de Snitterfielde in com. prædicto yoman, in viginti marcis bonæ et legalis monet. Angliæ, solvendum eidem Roberto aut suo certo attornat. executoribus, administratoribus, vel assignatis suis. Ad quam quidem solutionem bene et fideliter faciendum obligamus nos hæredos, executores, et administratores nostros firmiter per præsentes sigillo nostro sigillat. Dat decimo quinto die mensis Octobris, anno regni dominæ Elizabeth. Dei gratia Angliæ, Franciæ et Hiberniæ regina, fidei defensor. &c. vicesimo primo.

The condition of this obligacion is such, that if thabove bounden John Shackspere and Marye his wyeffe, theire heires and the heires of eyther of them,

theire executors administrators and assignes and everye of them, doe well and trulye observe performe fulfyll and keepe all and singular covenants graunts artycles and agreements which on theire partes are to be observed performed fulfylled and kepte, contayned comprised and specified in one paire of indentures bearinge date the daye of the date of this present obligacion, made betwene the abovenamed Robarte Webbe on the one partye and thabove bound John Shackspere and Marie his wieffe on the other partye, that then this present obligacion to be utterlye voyde and of none effecte, or ells to stande remayne and be in full power strengthe force and vertue.



Sealed and delyvered in the presens of Nycholas Knoolles, vicar of Auston, Wyllyam Mayds, and Anthonye Osbaston, with other moe.

According to the above indenture, the consideration given for Mary Shakespeare's share in the Snitterfield property was £4, but it appears from a fine, preserved in the Chapter House, hitherto unnoticed, dated in Easter Term, 22 Eliz. 1580, that she had a reversionary interest; on the death of Agnes Arden, in the same property, of far higher value; for it is parted with to the same Robert Webbe for £40. This curious fact, and the circstances of the property, will be better understood by an entire transcript of the foot of the fine:

[Inter Robertum Webbe quer. et] Johannem Shackspere et Mariam uxorem ejus defore. de sexta parte duarum partium . . . . . duorum pomar. sexaginta acrarum terræ decem acrarum

prati et triginta acrarum . . . . . in tres partes dividend. in Snitterfylde, unde placitum convencionis sum. fuit . . . . . dicti Johannes et Maria recogn. prædictam sextam partem cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius . . . . . per se et hæred. ipsius Mariæ, quod prædicta sexta pars cum pertinentiis quam Agnes Arden vidua tenet ad terminum vitæ suæ de hæreditate prædictæ Mariæ die quo hæc concordia facta fuit, et quæ post decessum ipsius Agnetis ad prædictam Mariam et hæred. suos debuit reverti, post decessum ipsius Agnetis integre reman. prædicto Roberto et hæredibus suis, tenend. d. capitalibus dominis feodi ill. per servic. quæ ad prædictam sextam partem pertinent in perpetuum. Et prædicti Johannes et Maria et hæredes ipsius Mariæ warant. prædicto Roberto et hæredibus suis prædictam sextam partem cum pertinentiis (sicut prædictum est) contra prædictos Johannem et Mariam et hæredes ipsius Mariæ in perpetuum. Et pro hac recogn. concessione warant. fine &c. idem Robertus dedit prædictis Johanni et Mariæ quadraginta libras sterlingorum.

This copy of the fine is unfortunately imperfect, and a search at the other repository of the same description of records proved fruitless; but the following entry, which I discovered in the King's Silver Books at Carlton Ride, supplies the information lost by the lacunæ in the above:—

Warr. Inter Robertum Webbe q. et Johannem Shackspere et Mariam uxorem ejus def. de sexta parte duarum partium duorum mesuagiorum, duorum gardinorum, duorum pomar., lx. acr. terræ, x. acrarum prati, et xxx. acr. jampnorum et bruerum, cum pertinentiis, in tres partes dividend. in Snitterfylde. [Pasch. 22 Eliz.]

But the property is described somewhat differently in the following note at Stratford,—

Warr. In onere Georgii Digbie arm. [vic.] com. præd. de anno vicesimo tercio reginæ Elizabeth.

Fines de Banco anno vicesimo secundo reginæ Elizabeth. pro term. Paschæ.

De Roberto Webbe pro li. con. cum Jo. Shackespeare et de placito con. de vj. parte ij. partium ij. mess. ij. gard. ij. pom. lv. acr. terræ et al. cum pertin. in Snytterfeild. } vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

R. per me Johannem Cowper, subvic.

The circumstances of John Shakespeare at this period have never yet been so fully developed, and they lead inevitably to the conclusion that for some reason or other

he was greatly in want of money. It is not very easy to say how long this pressure continued, but it was probably of considerable duration; for it seems that on Sept. 29, 1580, he tendered the mortgage-money due to Lambert, but was unable or unwilling to pay other debts at the same time. This appears from the replication of John and Mary Shakespeare in the proceedings of the Chancery suit, 1597, and the fine just given above tells us very plainly that in order to furnish the mortgage-money, he was obliged to dispose of a valuable reversionary interest; for it is hardly likely, considering the age and ill-health of Agnes Arden in 1580, anything short of necessity would have induced him to sell it. The proceedings of the Chancery suit, relating to this period, although taking place in 1597, must be introduced here. John and Mary Shakespeare mortgaged the estate to Lambert in 1578 for £40, and two years afterwards they tendered that sum in discharge, which was declined, unless other debts, also due to Lambert, were paid. On Lambert's death his son John retained possession of the premises, and the present suit was instituted to recover them. No decree in this case has been found, and Mr. Collier gives it as his opinion that the estate was relinquished by Lambert to John Shakespeare, "perhaps on the payment of the £40, and of the sums which his father had required from John and Mary Shakespeare in 1580, and which in 1597 they did not dispute to have been due." But surely if John Shakespeare's tender in 1580 were legal, some compensation would have been awarded for the illegal occupation by Lambert.

To the righte honorable Sir Thomas Egerton, knighte, lorde keper of the greate seale of Englande.

In most humble wise complayninge, sheweth unto your good lordshippe your dailye oratours John Shakespere of Stratford upon Avon, in the county of Warwicke, and Mary his wief, that whereas your saide oratours were lawfully seised in their demesne as of fee, as in the righte of the saide Mary, of and in

one mesuage and one yard land with thappurtenaunces, lyinge and beinge in Wylnecote, in the saide county: And they beinge thereof so sesed, for and in consideracion of the some of fowerty pounds to them, by one Edmounde Lamberte of Barton on the Heath in the saide countie paide, your sayde oratours were contente that he the saide Edmounde Lamberte shoulde have and enjoye the same premisses, untill suche tyme as your sayde oratours did repaie unto him the saide some of fowertie pounds: By reasone whereof the saide Edmounde did enter into the premisses and did occupie the same for the space of three or fower yeares; and thissues and profyttes thereof did receyve and take, after which your saide oratours did tender unto the saide Edmounde the sayde somme of fowerty pounds, and desired that they mighte have agayne the sayd premisses accordinge to theire agreement; which money he the sayde Edmounde then refused to receyve, sayinge, that he woulde not receyve the same, nor suffer your sayde oratours to have the saide premisses agayne, unlesse they woulde paye unto him certayne other money which they did owe unto him for other matters; all which notwithstandinge, nowe so yt ys; and yt maye please your good lordshippe, that shortelie after the tendringe of the sayde fowertie pounds to the saide Edmounde, and the desyre of your sayde oratours to have theire lande agayne from him, he the saide Edmounde att Barton aforesayde dyed, after whose deathe one John Lamberte, as sonne and heire of the saide Edmounde, entred into the said premisses and occupied the same; after which entrie of the sayde John your said oratours came to him and tendred the saide money unto him, and likewise requested him that he woulde suffer them to have and enjoye the sayde premisses accordinge to theire righte and tytle therein and the promise of his saide father to your saide oratours made, which he the saide John denyed in all things, and did withstande them for entringe into the premisses, and as yet doeth so contynewe still; and by reasone that certaine deedes and other evydences concerninge the premisses and that of righte belong to your saide oratours, are coume to the hands and possession of the sayde John, he wrongfullie still keepeth and detayneth the possession of the saide premisses from your saide oratours, and will in noe wise permytt and suffer them to have and enjoye the sayde premisses accordinge to theire righte in and to the same; and he the saide John Lamberte hathe of late made sondrie secreate estates of the premisses to dyvers persones to your said oratours unknowen, whereby your saide oratours cannot tell againste whome to bringe theire accions att the comen lawe, for the recovery of the premisses: In tender consideracion whereof, and for so muche as your saide oratours knowe not the certaine dates or contentes of the saide wrytings, nor whether the same be contayned in bagge, boxe, or cheste, sealed locked or noe, and therefore have no remeadie to recover the same evydences and wrytings by the due course of the comen lawes of this realme; and for that also by reasone of the saide secreate estates so made by the saide John Lamberte as aforesaide, and want of your saide oratours havinge of the evidences and wrytings as aforesaide, your sayde oratours cannot tell what accions or against whome, or in what manner to bring theire accion for the recoverie of the premisses at the comen

lawe; and for that also, the sayde John Lamberte ys of greate wealthe and abilitie, and well frended and alied amongest gentlemen and freeholders of the countrey in the saide countie of Warwicke, where he dwelleth, and your saide oratours are of small wealthe and verey fewe frends and alyance in the saide countie, maye yt therefore please your good lordshippe to graunt unto your saide oratours the Queenes Majesties moste gracyous writte of subpœna, to be directed to the saide John Lamberte, comandinge him thereby att a certaine daie and under a certaine payne therein to be lymytted, personally to appear before your good lordshippe in her Majesties highnes courte of chauncerie, then and there to answere the premisses; and further to stande to and abyde suche order and direction therein, as to your good lordshippe shall seeme best to stande, with righte, equytie, and good conscyence, and your sayde oratours shall daylie praye to God for the prosperous healthe of your good lordshippe with increase of honour longe to contynewe.

J. Stovell.

The answeare of John Lamberte, defendante, to the byll of complainte of John Shakspeere and Mary his wief complainantes.

The said defendante (savinge to himselfe both nowe and att all tymes hereafter, all advantage of excepcion to the uncertentie and insufficiencie of the said complainants byll, and also savinge to this defendante such advantage as by the order of this honorable courte he shalbe adjudged to have, for that the like byll, in effecte conteyninge the selfe-same matter, hath byne heretofore exhibited into this honorable courte againste this defendante, wherunto this defendante hath made a full and directe answeare wherin the said complainante hath not proceeded to hearinge) for a seconde full and directe answeare unto the said complainantes byll sayeth, that true yt is (as this defendante verylie thinkethe,) that the said complainants were, or one of them was, lawfully seized in theire or one of theire demeasne, as of fee, of and in one messuage, and one yearde and fower acres of lande with thappurtenaunces, lyeinge and beinge in Wilmecott, in the parishe of Aston Cawntloe in the countie of Warwicke, and that they or one of them soe beinge thereof seized, the said complainante John Shakspeere by indenture beringe date uppon or about the fowertenth daye of November, in the twentieth yeare of the raigne of our Sovereigne Lady the Queenes Majestie that now ys, for and in consideracion of the summe of fortie pownds of lawfull Englishe monney unto the said complainante paide by Edmunde Lamberte, this defendants father in the said byll named, did geve, graunte, bargaine, and sell the said messuage, and one yearde and fower acres of lande with thappurtenaunces, unto the saide Edmunde Lamberte, and his heires and assignes, to have and to holde the said messuage, one yearde, and fower acres of lande with thappurtenaunces unto the saide Edmunde Lamberte, his heires and assignes, for ever: In which indenture there is a condicionall provisoe conteyned, that if the said complainante did paye unto the said Edmunde Lamberte the summe of fortie pownds uppon the feast daie of St. Michell tharchangell which shoulde

be in the yeare of our Lorde God one thousande fyve hundred and eightie, att the dwellinge howse of the said Edmund Lamberte, in Barton on the Heath in the said countie of Warwicke, that then the said graunte, bargaine, and sale, and all the covenaunts, graunts, and agreements therin conteyned, shulde cease and be voyde, as by the said indenture, wherunto this defendante for his better certentie doth referre himselfe, may appeare; and afterward, the said complainante John Shakspeere, by his Deede Pole and Liverie theruppon made, did infeoffe the said Edmunde Lamberte of the saide premisses, to have and to holde unto him the said Edmunde Lamberte and his heires for ever; after all which, in the terme of Ester, in the one and twenteth yeare of the Quenes Majesties raigne that nowe ys the said complainantes in due forme of lawe did levye a fyne of the said messuage and yearde lande, and other the premisses, before the Queenes Majesties justices of the comon plees att Westminster, unto the saide Edmunde Lamberte, and his heires, sur conizance de droyt, as that which the said Edmunde had of the gifte of the said John Shakspeere, as by the said pole deede, and the chirographe of the said fine, wherunto this defendante for his better certentie referreth himselfe, yt doth and maye appeare: and this defendante further sayeth, that the said complainante did not tender or paye the said summe of fortie pownds unto the said Edmunde Lamberte, this defendants father, uppon the said feaste daye, which was in the yeare of our Lorde God one thowsande fyve hundred and eightie, accordinge to the said provisoe in the said indenture expressed. By reason whereof this defendants said father was lawfully and absolutly seized of the said premisses in his demeasne as of fee, and aboute eleven yeares laste paste thereof, dyed seized: by and after whose decease the said messuage and premisses with thappurtenaunces descended and came, as of righte the same oughte to descende and come, unto this defendante, as sonne and nexte heire of the said Edmunde; by vertue whereof this defendante was and yet is of the said messuage, yearde lande and premisses, lawfully seized in his demeasne as of fee, which this defendante hopeth he oughte both by lawe and equitie to enjoye, accordinge to his lawfull righte and tytle therin: and this defendante further sayeth, that the said messuage, yearde lande, and other the said premisses or the moste parte thereof, have ever sythence the purches therof by this defendantes father, byne in lease by the demise of the said complainante; and the lease therof beinge nowe somewhat nere expyred, wherby a greater value is to be yearly raised therby, they the said complainants doe now trowble and moleste this defendante by unjuste suts in lawe, thinkinge therby, (as yt shoulde seme,) to wringe from him this defendante some further recompence for the said premisses then they have alreddy received: without that that yt was agreed that the said Edmunde Lamberte shoulde have and enjoy the said premisses in anie other manner and forme, (to the knowledge of this defendante,) then this defendante hath in his said answeare heretofore expressed, and without that, that anie deedes or evidences concernynge the premisses that of righte belonge to the said complainantes are come to the handes and possession of this defendante, as in the said byll is untruly supposed, and without that, that anie other matter, cause,

or thinge, in the said complainantes byll conteined, materiall or effectuall in the lawe, to be answeared unto, towchinge or concernynge him this defendante, and herein before not answeared unto, confessed and avoyded, traversed or denied, is true, to this defendants knowledge or remembrance, in suche manner and forme as in the said byll the same is sett downe and declared. All which matters this defendante is reddy to averre and prove, as this honorable courte shall awarde, and prayethe to be dismissed therhence with his reasonable costs and charges in this wrongfull sute by him unjustly susteyned.

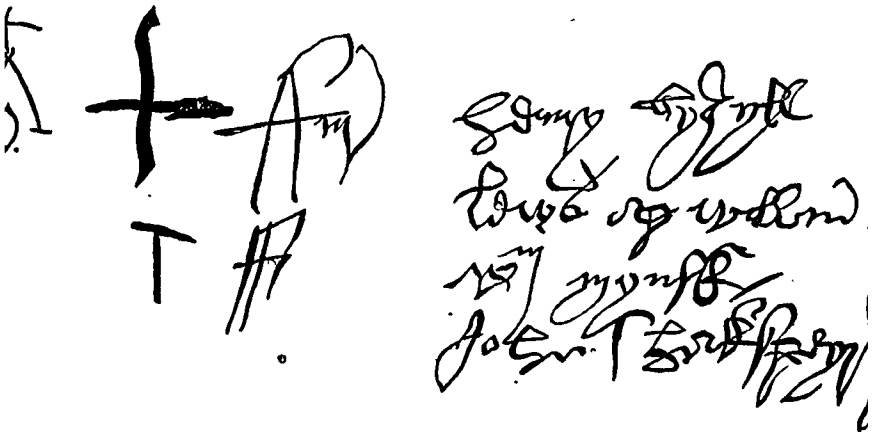
OVERBURY.

The replicacion of John Shakespere and Mary his wief, plent, to the answere of John Lamberte, defendant.

The said complaynaunts, for replicacion to the answere of the said defendant, saie that theire bill of complaynt ys certayne and sufficient in the lawe to be answered; which said bill, and matters therein conteyned, these complainants will avowe, verefie, and justifie to be true and sufficient in the lawe to be answered unto, in such sorte, manner, and forme, as the same be sett forthe and declared in the said bill; and further they saie that thanswere of the said defendaunt is untrue and insufficient in lawe to be replied unto, for many apparent causes in the same appearinge, thadvantage whereof these complainants praie may be to theym nowe and at all tymes saved, then and not ells; for further replicacion to the said answere, they saie that accordinge to the condicion or proviso mencioned in the said indenture of bargaine and sale of the premisses mencioned in the said bill of complaynt, he this complainant John Shakspere did come to the dwellinge house of the said Edmunde Lambert, in Barton uppon the heathe, uppon the feaste daie of St. Michaell tharcheangell, which was in the yeare of our Lorde God one thousand fyve hundred and eightie, and then and there tendered to paie unto him the said Edmunde Lambert, the said fortie poundes, which he was to paie for the redempcion of the said premisses; which somme the said Edmunde did refuse to receyve, sayinge that he owed him other money, and unles that he the said John would paie him altogether, as well the said fortie pounds as the other money, which he owed him over and above, he would not receave the said fortie pounds, and imediatlie after he the said Edmunde dyed, and by reason thereof, he the said defendant entered into the said premisses, and wrongfullie kepeth and detayneth the said premisses from him the said complainant: without that any other matter or thinge, materiall or effectuall, for these complainantes to replie unto, and not herein sufficientlie confessed and avoyded, denyed and traversed, ys true: all which matters and things thes complaynants are redie to averr and prove, as this honorable court will awarde, and pray as before in theire said bill they have praied.

In dorso, Ter. Michael. Annis 40 et 41. J. STOVELL.

In discussing these subjects connected with John Shakespeare's property, one important question has been omitted, which may here with propriety be briefly discussed,—when did he relinquish his occupation as a glover, and become a yeoman? As early as 1579 we find him described under this latter title, and in a deed executed by him in that year, he no longer signs with the curious cabalistic-looking character traced by him in 1559 and 1565, given in the fac-similes at p. 19 and p. 18, or with the similar but somewhat different mark in the accompanying copy of a presentation made when he was one of the affeerors in 1561. Some-



where, then, between the years 1565 and 1579, he commenced marking with a cross, and I suspect it will be conceded that when he did so, at that time also did he leave off his trade in gloves. The earlier mark of John Shakespeare was his merchant's mark, representing under both forms an instrument used in the glove trade, rudely executed perhaps, but still symbolical of his occupation. An instrument of a very similar form is still in common use for stretching or opening the fingers of new gloves, and a character not unlike that above given, may be seen in the "Wits Interpreter," 8vo. 1671, p. 519. Perhaps some

one, who has leisure for the inquiry, will be able to produce a contemporary illustration of this opinion.

John Shakespeare has already been traced through the various offices of the corporation to 1569, when he was the chief magistrate of Stratford. From 1570 to 1586, he continued one of the aldermen, and he appears to have been a most regular attendant at the councils of the corporation till 1577, his name very seldom occurring as an absentee before that period. From 1577, however, till his removal in 1586, he scarcely made his appearance in the chamber. In a list of aldermen at a meeting held January 23d, 1577, "ab. Johannes Shaxpeare," and he is not marked as being present till October 4th, 1577; he then attended regularly till January 15th, 1578, after which he absents himself till September 5th, 1582, when he is again marked as being present, and he is also mentioned among the "alldermen present," at a hall holden November 4th, 1582, in a loose paper at the end of the corporation book marked A.* After this, he attended no more meetings of the corporation, and on September 6th, 1586, he was deprived of his alderman's gown:—

Stratford Burgus. } Ad aulam ibidem tent. vj. die Septembris anno regni Dominæ Elizabethæ, &c. vicesimo octavo.

At thys halle William Smythe and Richard Courte are chosen to be aldermen in the places of John Wheler and John Shaxspere; for that Mr. Wheler dothe desyre to be put owt of the companye, and Mr. Shaxspere dothe not come to the halles when they be warned, nor hathe not done of longe tyme.

The pertinacity with which John Shakespeare absented himself arose most probably from a desire to withdraw himself from the corporation.† At a hall held on September

* It has been usually stated he did not attend the councils after 1579. See Knight's Shakspere, a Biography, p. 107.

† Mr. Collier thinks that as it is stated that Wheler desired to withdraw, so also, if John Shakespeare had had the same wish, it would have been adduced. But Wheler may have resigned officially, and the council were not obliged to recognise any such desire, however well known, unless especially communicated to them.

4th, 1583, he was the only alderman not present. He is marked as being there on August 31st, 1586, but this is so much at variance with the note above given, that it may perhaps be merely a clerical error. Yet is the fact of his continual absences so far from being an evidence of a falling off in circumstances, that it implies on the contrary the ability to pay the fines for non-attendance; for we cannot doubt if he had not paid them, some notice, earlier than the above, would have appeared in the books. At a hall on November 19th, 1578, it was "ordened at this hall that every alderman and burgese that hath made default not comminge to this hall accordinge to the order shall paye their merciament." That he was in Stratford and able to attend in the year he was excluded from the corporation is unquestionable, for he was summoned on a jury of a Court of Record, May 25th, 28 Eliz.

The occupations of John Shakespeare about this period were probably those of an ordinary yeoman of the time. There is reason to believe that his activity continued for many years afterwards. In 1592, we find him engaged in two instances in making inventories of the goods of persons deceased, a task which the old law-books tell us should be performed by "four credible men or more." With the desire of rendering my collection of documentary evidence as complete as possible, I subjoin these papers, although I need scarcely add that for all ordinary purposes brief abstracts would have been sufficient.

A trew and a perfecte inventory of the goodes and cattells of Henry ffeelde late of Stretford uppon Avon in the county of Warwyke tanner, now decessed, beynge in Stretford aforesayd, the xxj.the daye of Auguste, a° Domini, 1592, *by Thomas Trussell, gentylman, Mr. John Shaksper, Richard Sponer, and others, viz.*

In the hall ther.

Inprimis, on table . . . . . uppon a joyned fram, feyve smale joyned stowlls, with a smale cheare, with the waynscott benche, and the paynted clothes ther - - - - - - - - - - x.s.

Item, one payer of aldyornes, a fyer showle, a payre of tongs, toow payer of pothucks, one payer of pothangers . - - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

In the parler ther.

Inprimis, one smale table uppon a frame, with tow joyned stowlls, ij. cheares, one joyned presse, one joyned bedde, a smale planck, beyng aboute the vallewe of - - - - - - - - xx.*s.*

Item, three paynted clothes ther, one fether-bed, one floke bed, tow bowlsters, one pillow, one bed kevoringe of yellow and grene, fore blankets old, one old karpet - - - - - - - - xx.*s.*

Item, one longe cheaste wherin ys conteyned feyve payer of hurden course sheets, thre cowrse table clothes, seaven cowrse weypers, three cowrse table napkins - - - - - - - - x.*s.*

Item, in the shorter coffer ther ys conteyned iij. payer of flaxen sheets, one payer of hempton sheets, one flaxen table clothe, and one other of hempe, halfe a dowsen of table napkins of flaxe and j. d. of hempe, which were redeemed by his weyfe since his decesse, ij. dyaper napkins, fowre pillowbeares flaxen, valewed - - - - - - - - xl.*s.*

In the butterey this pewter.

Inprimis, vj. puter disshes, eight platters, threttеen sawcers, three porridge disshes, fowr saltsellers, feyve candelstyks of latteyn, one quarte potte, toue chamber potts, and a woyne poyncte potte, tow flower potts, at - xx.*s.*

In brasse ther.

Item, three brasse potts, three possenetts, a smalle panne old, iij. cawthornes and vj. skymers, a latteyn bason, one chaffyng dyshe, a frying panne, a drypping panne of plate - - - - - - xx.*s.*

Item, ffowr broches great and smalle, one payer of cobbards - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*

In the chamber next to the parler.

Item, one trowkle bedd with a flocke bedd, a kevoring old, and old bolster, and one old blankette, a lytle rownd table, tow old chestes, at - x.*s.*

In the lytle chamber next to that.

Item, one bedstead of bords, one flocke bedde, one dowble twylley, an old kevoring, one save, fowr old coffers, one presse mad of bords, loyke shelves, at - - - - - - xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

In the klyne howse.

Item, syx barrells for beare, feyve loomes, fower payles, fowr formes, three wheels, one bowlting wytche, tow skipps, one using fatte, ij. skells, a tablebord, ij. payer of tressells, ij. streyks, one gallon, fower shelves - xx.*s.*

Item, a leade standeng in frame, one axe, ij. shovells, and a spade, vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

Item, in one sheller or over chamber one joyned bedsteed and one cheese

crathe, one other fether bedde, toue bowlsters, one keveringe, ij. blanketts, and one pyllow more which ys now newly brought home, vallewed at - l.*s.*

Item, in mawlte three quarters xxx.s., three maulte shovells, one beame with old skalles to the same, ij. dowseyn of trenchers, one dowseyn of pewter spones, valewed att - - - - - - - xxxj.*s.*

In the yeord there.

Item, three bundells of shorte lathe and one of longe lathe, two loods of woode, iij. shere peyks, one bucket with cocke, lyncks, corde and wayndlesse, one old heare, fowr halfe quarters baggs good and badde, one watching byll - - - - - - - - xij.*s.*

Item, in old iron there - - - - - - xij.*d.*

Somma totallis, xiij.*li.* xiiij.*s.*

John Shaksper senior. +

By me Rychard Sponer.

Per me Thomas Trussell, script. present.

This document is entirely in the handwriting of Thomas Trussell, with the exception of the signature of Richard Sponer. The signature "John Shaksper senior" is undoubtedly in Trussell's handwriting, his mark, as usual, placed a little below his name, as in the document dated in 1565, on which so much has been written by Mr. Knight. The mark is that used by John Shakespeare on other occasions about this period. Mr. Collier, who has seen this inventory but not the following one, seems to say (p. 143) that the mark of John Shakespeare does not occur. He has either overlooked it, or, what is more probable, used a different copy of the document.

The true and perfect inventory of Raph Shawe of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwicke woll-dryver decessed, taken the xxiiij.th day of Julye in the xxxiiij.th yeare of the raynge of our soverayngne lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God of England, France, and Ierland, Queene, defender of the Feyth, &c. by the discretion of Mr. John Shakspere, Mr. Willyam Wilson, and Valentyne Tant, with others.

Inprimis, his apparell, praysed at - - - - - xx.*s.*

Item, in the hall a joyned table bord, a chere, ij. joyned stowlls, and ij. benches, at - - - - - - - vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

Item, a joyned cubbord in the hall, with certayne shilves, and paynted clothes - - - - - - - - x.*s.*

Item, iij. brasse pans, vij. brasse potts, ij. kettles, ij. chaffyng dysshes, iiij. candlestycks, with other smale implements of brasse - - iij.*li.*

Item, xxvj. peeces of pewter, ij. salts, and a pewter pott - - xx.*s.*

Item, ij. pere of pott hooks, one . . . . , a fyer shovell, a bradyron, with other smale implements of yron ware, and a pare of bellows - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*

Item, iij. quysshyns, a lyttle grene say for the wyndow - - xx.*d.*

In the parlor.

Imprimis, one joyned table, a cubbord, one joyned bed, a presse, one joyned forme, a joyned stoole, a bench, a shilf, a coffer, a curtayne for a wyndowe, and paynted clothes - - - - - - - xl.*s.*

Item, ij. fetherbeds, ij. flockbeds, three boulsters, iij. pillows - liij.*s.* iij.*d.*

Item, xj. pere of sheetes, iiij. pillow bures, iij. bordclothes, fyve towels, viij. table napkyns, with other smale implements of lynnen - - iij.*li.*

Item, xij. peces of pewter, iij. salts, one chamber pot, one candlestycke, ij. dosen of trenchers, with glasse and earth-pots - - xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Item, fyve hillyngs, one carpett, one pere of blankets - - xl.*s.*

Item, xxj. todde of woll - - - - - - xx.*li.*

In the saller.

Item, vj. fodd of yearne - - - - - - vij.*li.*

Item, halfe a quarter of rye - - - - - iiij.*s.* vj.*d.*

Item, vj. barrells, one chere, one chest, one typpyng hurdle, fowr skeynyng wheles, one spynyng whele, iiij. pere of woll cards, a beame of yron, scales and wights of lead, and one packeclothe, with smale implements - - x.*s.*

In the nether howse.

Item, two kevers, a stryke and a frying panne, a grydyron, one stoole, certeyne bords, with other smale implements of two packclothes, and a saddle - x.*s.*

In the loft over the hall.

Imprimis, two bedsteds, a truclebed, and a lyttle bord - - iiij.*s.*

Item, ij. fetherbeds, ij. flockbeds, ij. hillyngs, ij. pere of blankets, fowr boulsters, and paynted clothes - - - - - - xlij.*s.*

Item, twentye quarters of malt - - - - - x.*li.*

Item, one geldyng with saddle and bridle and other thyngs for hym - xl.*s.*

Item, the hey - - - - - xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*

Item, wod and coales - - - - - - x.*s.*

Item, payles, lomes, bucket, and bucket theeve, a hatchet, with other implements of wodd - - - - - - - v.*s.*

Item, in another howse a joyned bed, a table bord - - viij.*s.*

Som. totalis, lxj.*li.* vj.*s.* x.*d.*

In the same year, in the list of the moneys received by the Chamberlains of Stratford is the following, "Of John

Shackesper for Richard Fletcher, xx.*s.*;* but this is one of the very few entries which may relate to Shakespeare, the shoemaker, and as it does not seem to give us any information of value, it may be passed over. Mr. Collier has quoted a MS. in the State Paper Office of far greater importance. It is a return from Sir Thomas Lucy and other commissioners appointed to make inquiries respecting jesuits, priests, and recusants* in Warwickshire, dated 25 Sept. 34 Eliz. 1592; and in the return for Stratford on Avon occurs a very curious notice of John Shakespeare, implying that he was at that time in pecuniary difficulties, not attending the church for fear of a process of debt. Mr. Collier thinks no such process could be served on a Sunday, but this I suspect must be one of the many errors which result from measuring the usage of an early period by that of our own. The reader must draw his own conclusion from a copy of this portion of the return, which I here give at greater length than in the brief extract published by Mr. Collier:—

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* A list of recusants of a somewhat later date, preserved at Stratford, does not contain the names of any of the Shakespeare family, although some of the same parties are mentioned that occur in the paper given above:—

The recusanttes and suche as wee find that doe nott come to Churche.

Mrs. Jonne Barber, the wyffe of Mr. Thomas Barber.
Johne Wheyllers wyffe in Henlie Streytte.
Ann Burmum, the wyffe of Richarde Burmume.
Marie Cawdrye, the wyffe of Arthur Caudrye.
George Baidger, and Ailles his wyffe.
Margarett Bragge, and Aills her daughtter.
Sybele Caudrye wyddoe.
Marie Ellettes.
Larrance Abell for nott comminge to churche, and for worckinge of hollidaies contrarie to the lawe.
Johne Hancoxe for workinge uppone Chryssmas daie and other hollidaies, and for not comyng to church.
Henrie Browne for workinge of hollidaies.
Johne Fyfield for shutinge in a gunne.
Wee find theis faulltie.

The names of all sutch recusantes as have bene hearetofore presented for not commynge monethlie to the churche according to hir Majesties lawes, and yet are thoughte to forbeare the church for debtt, and for feare of processe, or for soom other worse faultes, or for age, sicknes, or impotencye of bodie.

In the hundred of Barlicheweye in the parrishe of Stratford upon Avon.

Mr. John Wheeler. John Wheeler his soon. Mr. John Shackespere. Mr. Nicholas Barneshurste. Thomas James alias Gyles. William Bainton. Richard Harrington. William ffluellen. George Bardolfe.	It is sayd that these laste nine coom not to churche for feare of processe for debtte.
Mris. Geffreyes vid. Mris. Barber. Julian Coorte. Griffen ap Robertes. Joane Welche. Mris. Wheeler.	Weare all here presented for recusantes, and doo all so continewe, saving Mris. Wheeler, who is conformed, and Griffen ap Roberts now deade. But the presenters say that all or the most of theese cannot coom to the church for age and other infirmities.

It must be remarked of this document that it distinctly professes to contain a list *of all such recusants as have been heretofore presented for not coming monthly to the church*, so that we may take it for granted that John Shakespeare's name had appeared as a non-attendant at divine service in an earlier return. How far it may be said to prove him distinctly a recusant is a question that must be left to be decided hereafter by evidence not now known. In the same bundle with the MS. now mentioned is an information presented by one Roger Shakespere, a name that has not yet occurred in the account of the family.*

* "The informacion of Roger Shakespere for the byhavior of one Cutberd Temple in absentinge himeself from the church. The sayd Roger Shakespere saythe that the fornamed Cutberd Temple hath not this twelve monethes and a quarter comme to his parishe churche, and was muche associate with one Mr. Aston, and one Mr. Dudley, and one Bedell whiche is nowe in the Tower, and one Glover of Coventrye, whose brother of late was burned. Moreover theire is a man that owethe unto the forsayd Cutberd Temple the somme of vij.*c.* poundes to be payd yerely a c.*li.* for the space of vij. yeres, and nowe would

But whatever troubles may have fallen to the lot of John Shakespeare, and they were certainly not few, there is nothing to show that he ever parted with the two freehold houses in Henley street, one of which is still regarded as the poet's birthplace. On his death they descended to his son William. They are mentioned in 1590, in a return to a commission issued out of the Exchequer for the survey of the possessions of Ambrose Earl of Warwick, preserved in the Carlton Ride Record Office. John Shakespeare held freely one tenement for the yearly rent of sixpence and suit of court; the other in the same manner for the yearly rent of thirteen-pence. The manor of Stratford was granted to the Earl of Warwick in 1562. As it may be interesting to some readers to see who held the Henley-street property at that period, I subjoin a copy of the document relating to that part of the town :—

Vicus vocatus Henley Strete.

Ballivus et burgenses villæ de Stretford tenent libere unum tenementum cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum viiij.*d.* sect. cur. - - viij.*d.*

Hæres Johannis Clopton gen. tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum viij.*d.* servic. - - - - - viij.*d.*

Georgius Whatelcy tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum iiij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - iiij.*d.*

Idem Georgius tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum xij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - - xij.*d.*

Johannes Combes gen. tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum - - - - - - - iiij.*d.*

Ballivus et burgenses villæ de Stretford tenent libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum vj.*d.* sect. cur. - - - vj.*d.*

Iidem ballivus et burgenses tenent libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis, et reddit. per annum - - - - - - viij.*d.*

Nuper gardian. Collegii de Stratford tenuit libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum viij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - viij.*d.*

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take iiij.*c.* to have it payed imediately: for what occacion he doeth it I cannot tell." Among the recusants "in the Parrisshe of Merivale" was "one Bates, a virginall player, presented theare to bee a most willfull recusant, and now (as it is sayd) is in Staffordsheere, but wheare the presenters knowe not."—*MSS. in the State Paper Office*, 1592.

Idem nuper gardian' Collegii de Stretford tenuit libere unum molendinum aquarum cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum iiij.*d.* sect. cur. iiij.*d.*

Ballivus et burgenses villæ de Stretford tenent libere unum tenementum cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum iij.*d.* sect. cur. - - iij.*d.*

Ricardus Hornebie tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum v.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - v.*d.*

Johannes Wheler tenet libere suum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum viij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - viij.*d.*

Johannes Shackespere tenet libere unum tenementum cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum vj.*d.* sect. cur - - - - vj.*d.*

Idem Johannes tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum xiij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - xiij.*d.*

Georgius Badger tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum x.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - x.*d.*

Johannes Johnson tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum xij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - xij.*d.*

Ballivus et burgenses villæ de Stretford tenent libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum iij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - iij.*d.*

Idem ballivus et burgenses tenent libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum - - - - - - iij.*d.*

Ricardus Quiney in jure Elizabethæ uxoris ejus tenet libere unum horreum per reddit. per annum - - - - - iiij.*d.*

Idem Richardus tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum xij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - xij.*d.*

Petrus Smarte tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum vj.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - vj.*d.*

Ballivus et burgenses villæ de Stretford tenent libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum xij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - xij.*d.*

Johannes Whelar tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum iiij.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - iiij.*d.*

Idem Johannes tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per redd. per annum x.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - x.*d.*

Idem Johannes tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum vj.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - - - vj.*d.*

Johannes Turnor tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum - - - - - - - vj.*d.*

Ricardus Quyney tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis in jure Elizabethæ uxoris ejus per reddit. per annum vj.*d.* sect. cur. - - vj.*d.*

Adrianus Quyney tenet libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum - - - - - - - ix.*d.*

Willielmus Smyth tenet libere unum horreum cum pertinentis per reddit. per annum - - - - - - - vj.*d.*

Nuper gardian. Collegii de Stretford tenuit libere unum tent. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum v.*d.* sect. cur. - - - - v.*d.*

Summa vici prædicti, xvij.*s.* vij.*d.*

In 1596, we find John Shakespeare applying at the Herald's College for a grant of arms, the draft of a grant by Dethick being dated in that year, and between that time and 1599, communications probably took place between him and the College on the subject, the draft of another grant from Dethick and Camden bearing the latter date. I entirely concur with Malone and Collier in considering that this attempt to make John Shakespeare a gentleman originated with his son William; and, indeed, it would be difficult to imagine an old man in John Shakespeare's position seeking the distinction for himself, the effort being attended with considerable expense. No grant of arms was made to John Shakespeare before 1597, for he is called *yeoman** in a deed dated in that year, which the reader will find at p. 37; so that the "patierne under Clarenc Cookes hand" was only a pleasing fiction. The grant must therefore have been made after that date, and we find the single arms here described over Shakespeare's monument at Stratford, not impaled with those of Arden, as the second grant authorised. As to the grant of lands to Shakespeare's ancestor, let any one carefully look at the interlineations and alterations in these drafts, and remembering the proofs here given that Dethick's notes were not always true, he will be inclined to come to the conclusion that no dependence whatever is to be placed on the correctness of the assertion. It is not at all necessary to suppose that Camden had any part in it; for the second draft, in which only his name occurs, is evidently formed in that respect from the former one.

There are two drafts of the intended grant of 1596, and one of 1599, preserved in the College of Arms. As they have never been fully exhibited in print, I have here given

* In the two following drafts he is termed *gent.*, and so he would always have been called after a grant had been made.

them at length, marking the interlineations in italics, and comparing the first with the other copy of the same grant.

Draft of a grant of arms to John Shakespeare, 1596, *MS. Vincent. Coll. Arm.* 157, *art.* 23, *compared with art.* 24.*

Shakespere, 1596.

To all and singuler noble and gentillmen of what estate or degre bearing arms to whom these presentes shall come, William Dethick alias Garter principall king of arms sendethe greetinges. Knowe yee that wheras by the authorite and auncyent *pryvelege and* custome *perteyning to* my *said* office *of principall king of arms from* the Quenes most exc. majeste and her highnes most noble and verteous† progenitors, I am to take generall notice and record and to make publique demonstracion and testemonie for all‡ causes of arms *and matters of*§ gentrie thoroughe out all her Majestes kingdoms and domynions, principalites, isles, and provinces, To thend that as some‖ by theyre auncyent names,¶ families, kyndredes and descentes, have and enjoye sonderie ensoignes and [cotes] of arms, so other for theyre valiant factes, magnanimite, vertue, dignites, and descertes, maye have suche markes and tokens of honor and worthinesse, whereby theyr name and good fame shalbe [knowen] and divulged, and theyre children and posterite *in all vertue to the* service of theyre prynce and contrie [encouraged]. Being therefore solicited and [by] credible report informed *that* John Shakespeare of Stratford uppon Avon in the counte of Warwick, whose *parentes and late* antecessors** were for there†† valeant and faithefull service advaunced and rewarded by the most prudent prince king Henry the Seventh of famous memorie, sythence whiche tyme they have continewed *at those partes* in good reputacion and credit; *and that the said John having maryed Mary, daughter and one of the heyrs of Robert Arden of Wilmcote, in the said counte, gent.* In consideration wherof, and for encouragement of his posterite, *to whom theyse achivmentes maie desend by the auncient custom and lawes of armes*‡‡ I have *therfore* assigned graunted *and by these presentes confirmed* this shield or cote of arms, viz.- Gould on a bend sable a speare of the first, *the poynt steeled, proper,* §§

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* The arms are placed at the top of this draft, with the motto *Non sanz droict.* In MS. Harl. 6140, and MS. Chetham 7996, are given tricks of the arms, the first being called, "William Shackspare, a pattentt per William Dethike, garter principall king of armes."

† *Victorious* in MS. art. 24.

‡ Originally, "matters and causes."

§ Originally, "and for all."

‖ *Manie gentelmen* in MS. art. 24.

¶ *Of* is here inserted in MS. art. 24.

** *Grandfather* is written over this word in the MS. art. 24.

†† *His*, MS. art. 24.

‡‡ This sentence has been omitted by all editors, probably because written at the bottom of the page.

§§ Originally *argent*, and it is *argent* in MS. art. 24.

and for his creast or cognizance, a faulcon, *his wynges displayed, argent*, standing on a wrethe of his coullors, supporting a speare gould steeled *as aforesaid*, sett upon a healmett with mantelles and tasselles as *hath ben accustomed and* more playnely appearethe depicted on this margent. Signeficng hereby* that it shalbe lawfull for the sayd John Shakespeare gent. and for his children yssue and posterite *at all tymes convenient and to make shewe of* and beare *blazon* the same *atchevement* on *theyre* shield or escucheons, *cote of arms*, seales, ringes, signettes, *creast, cognizance or penons, guydons, edefices, utensiles, lyveries, tombes or monumentes*, or otherwyse, *at all tymes* in all lawfull warrlyke factes or civile use and exercises, *according to the lawes of armes*, without lett or interruption of any *other* person or persons.† Yn wittnesse wherof I have hereunto subscribed my name, and fastened the seale of my office endorzed with the signett of my arms, At the Office of Arms, London, the xx.th daye of October, in the xxxix.te‡ yeare of the reigne of our Soveraigne Lady Elizabeth, by the Grace of God Quene of England, ffrance and Ireland, Defender of the Faithe, &c. 1596.

At the bottom of the second draft of this grant, the following curious note occurs. It has been often quoted, but never quite correctly,—

This John hath a patierne therof under Clarenc Cookes hand in paper xx. years past.

A justice of peace, and was baylefe, officer, and cheffe of the towne of Stratford uppon Avon xv. or xvj. years past.

That he hathe landes and tenementes of good wealth and substance, 500*li.*

That he mar[ried a daughter and heyre of Arden, a gent. of worship.]§

The second paragraph in these few notes, is sufficient of itself to show the attempt at making a good case by exceeding the truth. It implies that John Shakespeare was a justice of the peace appointed by the sovereign, not merely *ex officio* as Bailiff of Stratford. He certainly was never in that position in any other capacity, except possibly when he was chief alderman. The "othe of the baylyffe and principall alderman" commences, "yow shalle swere that *as*

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* *And by the authorite of my office aforesaid ratifieng*, MS. art. 24.

† Originally, "that maye usurpe and beare the same."

‡ Corrected to xxxviij. in the MS. art. 24.

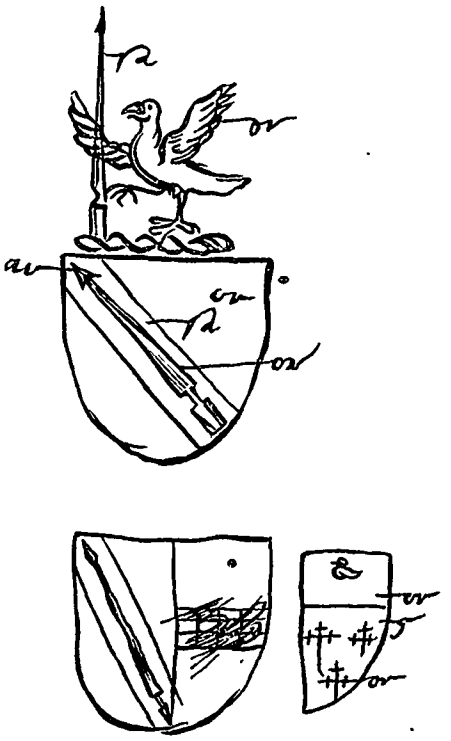
§ This passage between brackets is now decayed and lost from the MS. The lacuna has been supplied from Malone's copy, Shak. ii. 89. By *patierne* is merely meant a trick of the arms. In the unpublished Talbot MSS. a sketch of a coronet is so called. See Lodge's Catalogue, p. 108.

a justice of the peace and baylyffe of thys borowghe of Stratford and liberties therof."* The first paragraph has hitherto been written *this John sheweth*, but *sheweth* is evidently not the word in the MS., which seems to me to be *hath*, although I fear it can never be determined with certainty, one word having been written over another, rendering the whole most indistinct. In the grant for 1599, it was originally stated that *he shewed and produced* his coat of arms, but this was erased, and the whole matter is so confused, hesitating, and uncertain, that we may readily believe the real history perished with Dethick and Shakespeare. This is the more probable when we learn that the former was charged with having granted arms improperly, for in a MS. in the Herald's College, W. Z. 276, is preserved "the answere of Garter and Clarenciaux, kinges of armes, to a libellous scrowle against certein arms supposed to be wrongfully given," and under the head *Shakespere*, they say, "It may as well be said that Harely, who beareth gould a bend betweene two cotizes sables, and all other that [bear] or and argent a bend sables, usurpe the coate of the Lo. Mauley. As for the speare in bend is a patible difference; and the person to whome it was granted hath borne magestracy, and was justice of peace at Stratford upon Avon: he maried the daughter and heire of Arderne, and was able to maintaine that estate." We still have the truth exceeded in the implication he was a magistrate appointed by royalty. The following is no doubt a draft of the grant actually made. Even had we no other evidence, had a grant been made in 1596, it would have been so stated in 1599, supposing application had been made for permission to impale the arms of Arden. In the lower part of the trick here given, the Arden coat is

* MSS. in the Council Chamber, Stratford.

placed on one side merely because an error had been made in tracing the original shield.

Draft of a grant of arms to John Shakespeare, 1599, *MS. Coll. Arm.* R. 21.



To all and singuller noble and gentelmen of all estates and degrees bearing arms to whom these presentes shall com, William Dethick, Garter, Principall King of Arms of England, and William Camden, alias Clarencieulx, King of Arms for the sowth east and weste partes of this realme, sendethe greetinges. Knowe yee that in all nations and kingdoms the record and remembrances of the valeant factes and verteous dispositions of worthie men have ben made knowen and divulged by certeyne shieldes of arms and tokens of chevalrie, the grant and testimonie wherof apperteynethe unto us by vertu of our offices from the Quenes most exc. majeste, and her highenes most noble and victorious progenitors: wherfore being solicited, and by credible report informed, that John Shakespere, nowe of Stratford uppon Avon in the counte of Warwik gent., whose parent, *great grandfather*, and *late* antecessor, for his faithefull and approved service to *the late most prudent prince* King H. 7. of famous memorie, was advaunced and rewarded with landes and tenementes geven to him in those partes of Warwikeshere, where they have continewed by *some* descentes in good reputacion and credit; *and for that* the said John Shakespere having maryed the daughter and one of the heyrs of Robert Arden of Wellingcote in the said countie, and also produced *this his* auncient *cote* of arms heretofore assigned to him whilest he was *her Majesties officer* and baylefe of that towne, In consideration *of the premisses*,* and for the encouragement of his posterite, unto whom suche blazon of arms *and atchevementes of inheritance* from theyre *said* mother by the auncyent custome and lawes of arms maye

* Originally, *whereof*.

lawfully descend, We the said Garter and Clarencieulx have assigned, graunted, and confirmed, and *by these presentes exemplefied* unto the said John Shakespere, and to his posterite that shield and cote of arms,* viz. In a field of gould uppon a bend sables a speare of the first the poynt upward hedded argent;† and for his ereast or cognisanee, a ffalcon with his wynges displayed standing on a wrethe of his coullers supporting a speare‡ *armed* hedded *or* steeled *sylver*, fyxed uppon a helmet with mantelles and tasselles, as more playnely *maye* appeare depicted on this margent; and we have *lykewise uppon on other escucheon* impaled the same with the auncyent arms of *the said* Arden of Wellingcote, signifeing thereby that it *maye and* shalbe lawefull for the said John Shakespere gent. to beare and use the same *shieldes of arms*, single or impaled as aforesaid, during his naturall lyffe; and that it shalbe lawfull for his children, *yssue*, and posteryte (lawfully begotten) to beare, use, and quarter *and shewe forthe* the same with theyre dewe differences *in* all lawfull warlyke factes and civile use or exercises, according to the lawes of arms and custome that to gent. belongethe, without let or interuption of any person or person[s] for use or for bearing the same. In wyttnesse and testemonye wherof we have subscribed our names and fastened the seales of our offices, yeven at the Office of Arms, London, the ..... in the xlij.te. yeare of the reigne of our most gratious soveraigne Ladye Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, ... France, and Ireland, Defendor of the Faythe, &c. 1599.

The latest notice of John Shakespeare I have met with, occurs in a paper in the Council Chamber at Stratford, containing notes respecting an action of trespass brought by Sir Edward Grevil against several burgesses of Stratford in 1601, the year of John Shakespeare's death. The following list of names occurs amongst memoranda of the defendant's case, and perhaps were the witnesses intended to be called,—

Mr. Jhon Jefferryes.
Mr. Adrien Quyney.
Mr. Thomas Wheler alias Dier.
Mr. Jhon Sackesper.
Symon Biddle.

and this adds, I believe, one more specimen to the varieties of the Shakespeare orthography. He was buried Sep-

* Originally, *Whiche he shewed and produced*, but afterwards erased.
† Originally, *with steele argent.*
‡ Originally, *in pale.*

tember 8th, 1601, so that supposing he had only attained his majority when we first discover him as a resident in Henley street, he was at least seventy when he departed from the scene. It would have pleased us better had we found Shakespeare raising monuments to his parents in the venerable pile which now covers his own remains.

Adventitious circumstances lead us now to commemorate a person in humble life who has hitherto served more biographical purposes than are at all necessary. Whenever an entry relating to the poet's father was displeasing to an editor, or did not answer the purposes of his argument, a reply was always ready,—it refers to John Shakespeare, the shoemaker,* who lived at Stratford, and was a contemporary with his namesake. It is perfectly essential that this question of identity should be in some degree limited. This John Shakespeare is mentioned in the books of the corporation as a burgess present at a hall, 9 March, 22 Eliz. 1580. On Oct. 1st, 1585, he was sworn as one of the tasters,—

Tasters. } John Shaxpere.
Juratus. } Humfry Brace.

having been previously elected a constable on Sept. 6th, "George Badger, Roger Welshe, John Shaxspere, and Humffrey Brace;" and in the following January, the Chamberlains' accounts for 1586 tell us, "reseved of Shakspeare the shumaker for his fredom the xix. day of Jenuarey, xxx.*s.*" But he was poor or he would not have availed himself in 1587 of Oken's charity,† a loan of £5 to be employed in his business,—

* Thomas Shaxper, also a shoemaker, was an attesting witness to a bond dated 24 Sept. 20 Eliz. in the corporation records.

† Thomas Oken of Warwick, in his will dated Nov. 24th, 1570, gave £40 to Stratford on Avon, "to bestowe and deliver the said somme of ffourtie poundes to divers yong occupiers of the same towne of Stretford upon Avon in lone, in maner and forme following, That is to say, unto eight such honest yong men dwelling within the same towne that bee of some honest mistery or craft

At a hall there holden the xvij.th daie of ffebruarie, anno xxix°. dominæ reginæ Elizabeth. &c. Thomas Okens money was delivered to the personnes whose names are underwritten, to be emploied accordinge to the last will and testament of the saide Thomas.

John Shaxpere v.*li.*, his suerties Richard Sponer et Roberte Yonge.

And the acceptance of this loan also proves he was young, that being one of the express conditions in Oken's will. In a deed made June 10, 1588, one of the witnesses is "John Shaksper, corvizare." About this period he resided in Bridge Street, for in a list of the rents of the corporation made in October, 1589, he is noticed as a tenant of a house in that street, and the following paper, containing a similar list dated Jan. 12th, 1590-1, mentions him in the same part of the town.

Brydge Strett warde.

John Fyssher ten. Thomas Swane - - -	vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Rychard Bayles - - - - -	vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Thomas West - - - - -	vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Robart Wylson - - - - -	xxxiij.*s.* iij.*d.*
John Knyght for on small ten. - - -	xij.*d.*
Mr. Barber for ij. barnnes - - - -	xj.*s.* viij.*d.*
ij. muckhilles - - - - -	ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
ij. tenementes in Rather Strett - - -	x *s.*
Henry Fylde - - - - -	x.*s.*
John Shaxpere - - - - -	xij.*s.*
Rychard Ainge - - - - -	xx.*s.*

On Oct. 29, 1587, his wife Margery, whom he married on Nov. 25, 1584, was buried, but he appears to have soon married again, for a daughter Ursula was baptized March 11, 1588-9, a son Humphrey on May 24, 1590,* and a son Philip on Sept. 21, 1591. He is mentioned in the

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and householders within the same towne, being also of good name fame and conversacion with their neighbors in the same towne, That is to say, to every such one of the said eight yong men the somme of ffive poundes by the waye of loane to be occupied by him and them in their said craftes or mysteryes during the space of ffoure yeres."—*MS. Black Book in the Corporation Archives, Warwick.*

* At the commencement of this year he is mentioned as a trustee for the

corporation books as "Master of the companie of shoemakers," and he appears to have left Stratford about 1595, for then his house in Bridge Street was inhabited by another person, and he is heard of no more in the records of Stratford.

Now bearing in mind the very humble station and circumstances of this John Shakespeare, the rent of his house being only twelve shillings, and appearing in every way a very obscure person; the period of his residence at Stratford, moreover, being brought within very narrow limits, and it being clearly seen he obtained no rank in the corporation, is it necessary that the unfortunate identity of name with Shakespeare's father should any longer be a hinderance to our researches respecting the latter? It need be so in reality in very few cases. The parish register makes a distinction between them, *Mr.* John Shakespeare being the ex-bailiff, John Shakespeare being the shoemaker. There is every reason to believe the trade of the latter is inserted in the registry of the Court of Record whenever he is referred to, as in a case 25 Feb. 32 Eliz. where he is merely

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children of another shoemaker in the following entry in the register of the Corporation:—

Stratford } Ad aulam ibidem tent. ix° die Januarii anno regni dominæ
Burgus. } Elizabethæ, &c. xxxij°.

At this halle Mr. Abraham Sturley hathe delyverd thre severall obligacions to the use of the chyldren of one Thomas Robertes decessed; viz. one bande made to Thomas Robertes, one of the sonnes of Thomas Robertes decessed, of fyftie poundes, wheryn Richard Masters of Mylverton yoman, and John Shaxspere of Stratford, corvizer, stand bounde for the bredinge of the seyd Thomas Robertes, and the payment of xxxij.*li.* accordinge to the condycions of the seyd bande, whiche bande berithe date quarto die Octobris anno tricessimo Elizabethæ reginæ (1588), and one other bande beringe date tercio die Octobris anno xxx°. Elizabethæ Reginæ, of fyftie poundes made from John Laurence of Studley, husbandman, Edmunde Edes of the holte in the perishe of Studley husbandman, and William Bowkeley of Studley tanner, to John Robertes, one other of the sonnes of the seyd Thomas Robertes, for the payment of the somme of xxvj.*li.* accordinge to the condicion of the same bande; and also one other bande from John Shaxspere of Stratford, corvizer, and Edwardum Busshell de eisdem, wolsted wever, in lx.*li.* for the bredinge of Richard Robertes, the yongest sonne of the seyd Thomas, and also for payment of suche money as ys conteyned in the condicion of the same bande, beringe date tertio die Octobris anno xxx° E. Reginæ.—*MS. A. Corporation Records.*

bail for a party,—"Thomas Tetherton comparuit per Willielmum Courte atturn. suum ad sect. Willielmi Tetherton in placito transgr. super casum querens narr. et deff. li. lo. *Johannes Shaxpere, shumaker,* m. pro deff.," and in the register of the corporation proceedings, no difficulty whatever is found in distinguishing between the two.* We have already had a curious instance of identifying with more than usual clearness, when Shakespeare's father was intended, in an entry quoted at p. 45.

So many theories regarding the early life of Shakespeare have been founded on the alleged circumstances of his father, that the pains here taken to remove some of the doubts relating to the history of the latter, and to distinguish between him and his namesake, with more accuracy than has yet been accomplished, will be found of essential service in forming the most probable theory on the manner in which the poet's youth was passed. We are, unfortunately, without the means of attaining beyond a probability in this matter; for more than a century elapsed before any one committed to paper any intelligence on the subject, Shakespeare's contemporaries and immediate successors, who alone could have told much, passing away without suspecting how earnest would be the curiosity of posterity. About the year 1680, an inveterate gossip, who recorded every statement and anecdote that came in his way, and has, as

* Malone is so very inaccurate in his interpretation of the regnal years, that it would almost seem he based his calculations on a wrong formula. The dates in the part of his work which relates to this Shakespeare are extremely erroneous. At a hall held on 29 March, 1582, the following entries were made: "A note of Mr. Okens money and to whom yt ys lent, and the names of theire sureties, and also of Bakers money. *Bakers money;* Thomes Fourde, shuemaker, in v.*li.* for l.*s.* and Henrie Rogers, butcher, and John Shaxpere, shuemaker, his sueries. *Okens money;* John Fysher, shuemaker, in x.*li.* for v.*li.* and Humffrey Wheler and Humffrey Cowper, shuemakers, his sueries: Philippus Grene in x.*li.* for v.*li.* Henrie Rogers, butcher, and John Shaxpere, shuemaker, his sueries." Manuscripts at the Rolls House mention a John Shakespeare, a bit-maker in London in 1620 and 1621, and Thomas Shakspere, "one of the Quenes Majestics messengers of the chamber," is alluded to in a paper dated 1571 in the same office.

might be expected, left us a legacy of biographical history where the glimmerings of truth are scarcely visible from amidst the corrupted ground that overwhelms them, favoured Shakespeare by becoming his first biographer. In Aubrey's MSS. at the Ashmolean Museum, are contained the following curious memoranda, and however little they are deserving of credit, it is necessary the reader should be put in full possession of their contents. In this, as in every similar instance, instead of quoting a document by fragments, I shall insert it entire, and refer to it where necessary. A small part of Aubrey's narrative relates to Shakespeare's early life, but the reader will be enabled to judge much better of the value of the evidence by having it before him at once, than if I were merely to quote it as occasion served:—

Mr. William Shakespear was borne at Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwick; his father was a butcher, and I have been told heretofore by some of the neighbours that when he was a boy he exercised his father's trade, but when he kill'd a calfe he would doe it in a high style, and make a speech. There was at that time another butcher's son in this towne, that was held not at all inferior to him for a naturall witt, his acquaintance and cotanean, but dyed young. This Wm., being inclined naturally to poetry and acting, came to London I guesse about 18, and was an actor at one of the play-houses, and did act exceedingly well. Now B. Johnson was never a good actor, but an excellent instructor. He began early to make essayes at dramatique poetry, which at that time was very lowe, and his playes tooke well. He was a handsome well shap't man, very good company, and of a very readie and pleasant smooth witt. The humour of . . . . . the cunstable, in Midsomer Night's Dreame, he happened to take at Grendon in Bucks, which is the roade from London to Stratford, and there was living that constable about 1642, when I first came to Oxon. I thinke it was Midsomer night that he happened to lye there. Mr. Jos. Howe is of that parish, and knew him. Ben: Johnson and he did gather humours of men dayly wheresoever they came. One time, as he was at the tavern at Stratford super Avon, one Combes, an old rich usurer, was to be buryed, he makes there this extemporary epitaph,

Ten in the hundred the devill allowes,
But Combes will have twelve he sweares and vowes;
If any one askes who lies in this tombe,
Hoh! quoth the devill, 'Tis my John o' Combe!

He was wont to goe to his native countrey once a yeare. I thinke I have been told that he left 2 or 300 *lib.* per annum there and thereabout to a sister. I have heard Sir Wm. Davenant and Mr. Thomas Shadwell (who is counted the best comœdian we have now) say that he had a most prodigious witt (v. his Epitaph in Dugdale's Warw.), and did admire his naturall parts beyond all other dramaticall writers. He (Ben Johnsons Underwoods) was wont to say that he never blotted out a line in his life; sayd Ben Johnson, "I wish he had bloted out a thousand." His comœdies will remaine witt as long as the English tongue is understood, for that he handles *mores hominum:* now our present writers reflect so much upon particular persons and coxcombeities, that twenty yeares hence they will not be understood. Though, as Ben Johnson sayes of him that he had but little Latine and lesse Greek, he understode Latine pretty well, for he had been in his younger yeares a schoolmaster in the countrey. From Mr. . . . . Beeston.

The authority of Mr. Beeston, which is here quoted, does not refer to the whole account, but only to the last paragraph, which seems to have been added after the other part of the manuscript had been written. This circumstance is of importance, and worth careful notice, for it explains in some measure the inconsistency in the two accounts of Shakespeare's having been a butcher and a schoolmaster in his youth. Aubrey put down the first story as he heard it, or as he thought he had heard it, and this Mr. Beeston told him some time afterwards the poet had occupied himself in scholastic duties. This of course is also noted down, and if Aubrey had been told a dozen more accounts, we should also have had them recorded in the same farrago of unsubstantial gossip. The only safe plan of dealing with a writer of this mischievous class is to read, be amused, then examine his inconsistencies, and believe nothing.* Aubrey's narrative must be considered as exhibiting very indistinctly and imperfectly the floating Shakespearian traditions of his time, and little more. It is sufficiently evident the poet's father was not a butcher; but it is a

* This might be abundantly illustrated from Aubrey's works, e. g. "Anno 1670, not far from Cyrencester, was an apparition. Being demanded whether a good spirit or a bad, returned no answer, *but disappeared with a curious perfume and most melodious twang.*"—*Miscellanies*, ed. 1696, p. 67.

singular circumstance that the parish clerk of Stratford in 1693, then more than eighty years old, asserted that Shakespeare was bound apprentice to that trade.* This we have on unimpeachable authority, and it shows whence the first part of Aubrey's account was originally obtained. It shows more than this; for, however it may shock our fancy, it cannot be denied but that the best authority for the nature of the profession that Shakespeare was first engaged in exhibits him occupied under no poetic circumstances, unless killing a calf "in a high style" can be so interpreted. This authority was a native of Stratford, in a position that argues him likely to have been well informed, whose memory could most probably date back with accuracy from a time when the history of the case was well known. On April 10th, 1693, a person of the name of Dowdall addressed a small treatise in the form of a letter to Mr. Edward Southwell, endorsed by the latter "Description of severall places in Warwickshire," in which he gives the following account of Shakespeare, including information nowhere else to be met with:—†

The first remarkable place in this County that I visitted was Stratford super Avon, where I saw the effigies of our English tragedian Mr. Shakspeare; parte of his epitaph I sent Mr. Lowther, and desired he would impart it to you, which I finde by his last letter he has done: but here I send you the whole inscription.

Just under his Effigies in the wall of the chancell is this written.

Judicio Pylum, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mœrett, Olympus habet.
' Stay, passenger, why goest thou by soe fast?
Read, if thou canst, whome envious death hath plac't

* Malone discovered a notice of Thomas Shakespeare, a butcher, living at Warwick in 1610, and it is barely possible the tradition may have originated from the trade of that person.

† The original manuscript is in my possession, and an account of it may be seen in Thorpe's Catalogue of MSS. for 1836, p. 395. It is of great curiosity as one of the earliest independent authorities for the life of Shakespeare. It was published in 8vo. 1838, under the title of 'Traditionary Anecdotes of

Within this monument: Shakspeare, with whome
Quick nature dyed; whose name doth deck the tombe
Far more then cost, sith all that he hath writt
Leaves liveing art but page to serve his witt.
Obii A. Dni. 1616.
Ætat. 53, Die 23 Apr.

Neare the wall where his monument is erected lyeth a plaine free stone, underneath which his bodie is buried with this epitaph, made by himselfe a little before his death.

Good friend, for Jesus sake forbeare
To digg the dust inclosed here!
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curs't be he that moves my bones!

The clarke that shew'd me this church is above 80 years old; he says that this Shakespear was formerly in this towne bound apprenti[c]e to a butcher, but that he run from his master to London, and there was received into the playhouse as a serviture, and by this meanes had an oppertunity to be what he afterwards prov'd. He was the best of his family, but the male line is extinguishd: not one for feare of the curse abovesaid dare touch his grave-stone, tho his wife and daughters did earnestly desire to be layd in the same grave with him.

It was probably somewhere about the same period that Betterton the actor collected the biographical particulars on which Rowe founded his Life of Shakespeare in 1709, the latter informing us that "his veneration for the memory of Shakespeare engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire on purpose to gather up what remains he could of a name for which he had so great a veneration." Rowe is altogether silent respecting the tradition above alluded to, but he gives a very intelligible account of Shakespeare's youth. "His father," he says, "who was a considerable dealer in wool, had so large a family, ten children in all, that though he was his eldest son, he could give him no better education than his own employment. He had bred him, it is true, for some time at a free-school, where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was master of; but

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Shakespeare;' but as the orthography was modernized, and several lines omitted, besides many inaccuracies, I am well pleased to have the opportunity of giving a faithful copy of that portion of it which relates to our poet.

the narrowness of his circumstances, and the want of his assistance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language." After some general observations, Rowe proceeds to add, that, "upon his leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him; and in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young." There is no more consistent way of unravelling the confusion produced by these conflicting accounts than by repeating the conjecture made at p. 47, founded on the glimpses of truth in the preceding chaos, and the circumstances of Shakespeare's father as exhibited by the numerous extracts I have given from the Stratford records.

Shakespeare was certainly educated at the free-school at Stratford; for, even had we no direct evidence to that effect, when we consider his father's position in the corporation during his youth, we should most undoubtedly make the same assertion. Stratford had had the advantage of a free-school from a very early period, and Edward VI in 1553 granted a charter,* in which it was ordered from thence-forth to be called *The King's New School of Stratford upon Avon*. I have not discovered any account of the method or course of education in this school; but a person of the

* "We by virtue of these presents, create, erect, found, ordain, make, and establish a certain free grammar school, in the said town of Stratford upon Avon, to consist of one master or teacher hereafter for ever to endure, and so we will and command by these presents to be established and inviolably to be observed for ever—and that the said school, so by us founded, created, erected and established, shall for ever be commonly called, named and styled, *The King's New School of Stratford upon Avon;* and that in the same school there shall be a master or pedagogue to be named and appointed from time to time by the aforesaid Duke of Northumberland, his heirs and assigns, Lords of the Borough of Stratford upon Avon for the time being, which master or pedagogue so named or appointed shall be called, named, and styled by the name of Master or Pedagogue of the Free School of Stratford upon Avon."—*Charter*, 28 Jun. 7 Edw. VI.

name of Willis, who was born in the same year with Shakespeare, describes the manner adopted at a similar free-school at Gloucester, in his work entitled 'Mount Tabor,' 1639, p. 101, and a similar course was no doubt in vogue at Stratford :—

Upon an accident to me, when I was a schoole-boy.

Before Master Downhale came to be our master in Christ-school, an ancient citizen of no great learning was our schoolmaster, whose manner was to give us out severall lessons in the evening, by construing it to every forme, and in the next morning to examine us thereupon; by making all the boyes in the first forme to come from their seates and stand on the outsides of their desks, towardes the middle of the schoole, and so the second forme, and the rest in order, whiles himself walked up and down by them, and hearing them construe their lesson one after another; and then giving one of the words to one, and another to another (as he thought fit) for parsing of it. Now, when the two highest formes were dispatched, some of them, whom we called prompters, would come and sit in our seates of the lower formes, and so being at our elbowes, would put into our mouths answers to our masters questions, as he walked up and downe by us; and so by our prompters help we made shift to escape correction, but understood little to profit by it; having this circular motion, like the mil-horse that travels all day, yet in the end finds himselfe not a yard further then when he began.

I, being thus supported by my prompter, it fell out one day that one of the eldest schollers and one of the highest forme fell out with mee upon occasion of some boyes-play abroad; and in his anger, to doe mee the greatest hurt hee could (which then he thought to be to fall under the rod) he dealt with all the prompters, that none of them should helpe me, and so (as he thought) I must necessarily be beaten. When I found myselfe at this strait, I gathered all my wits together (as we say), and listned the more carefully to my fellowes that construed before me, and having also some easie word to my lot for parsing, I made hard shift to escape for that time. And when I observed my adversaries displeasure to continue against me, so as I could have no helpe from my prompters, I doubled my diligence and attention to our masters construing our next lesson to us; and observing carefully how in construction one word followed and depended upon another, which with heedfull observing two or three lessons more, opened the way to shew me how one word was governed of another in the parsing; so as I needed no prompter, but became able to bee a prompter myselfe; and so the evill intended to mee by my fellow-scholler, turned to my great good.

Let all those who have found the like gracious worke towards themselves (as many have in matters of more moment, if they observe it), come joyne with me in praising the Lord for the same, whose Providence governeth all things, and Who doth powerfully declare Himselfe to bee the onely true God, by such over-ruling the powers of darknesse, and the malicious and evill inten-

tions of men, bringing light out of darknesse, good out of evill, life out of death, and making all things worke together for the good and comfort of them that feare him.

Latin was taught in all the free-schools of any note at that period. Dr. Forman, describing an ignorant minister, says of him, "he could read English well, but he could noe Lattine more then the singell accidens, and that he lerned of his too sonnes that went daily to a free scolle;"* and the Doctor himself says he learned Latin when he was bedfellow to "on Gird of Kirton that wente every dai to the free scole." Ben Jonson's testimony seems to me in favour of Shakespeare's having received a proper education, "though thou hadst small Latine and lesse Greeke;" implying that he was not, as Jonson was, a scholar in the strict sense of the term, but that he certainly had some knowledge of those languages. Had Shakespeare not been educated at the free-school, Jonson would have had to tell us of his "no Latin and no Greek;" and W. Towers, who wrote some commendatory verses to Cartwright's Comedies, 8vo. 1657, referring to Jonson's celebrated remark, changes it to "little Latin and no Greek." The passage is too curious not to be given entire:—

Thy skill in wit was not so poorely meek
As theirs, whose little Latin and no Greek
Confin'd their whole discourse to a street-phrase,
Such dialect as their next neighbour's was;
Their birthplace brought o' th' stage, the clown and quean
Were full as dear to them as Persian scean.
Thou (to whom ware, thus offer'd, smelt as strong
As the clown's foot) hadst led thy muse along
Through all learn'd times and authors; thy rich pen
Travers'd more languages than they read men;
They but to Spain or Italy advance
The leg, or shrugg, or to our neighbour France;
Thy universall genius did know
The whole world's posture, and mixt idioms too:

* MSS. Ashmole 208, written about 1600.

But these, as modern facultics, thy soul
Rear'd higher up, learnt only to controul;
In abler works and tongues yet more refin'd,
Thou wedgd'st thyself, till they grew to thy mind;
They were so wrapt about thee, nõne could tell
A difference, but that Cartwright did excell!

If this applies chiefly to Shakespeare, as would appear from the allusion just mentioned, it offers a curious argument in favour of his knowledge of European languages. The whole is directed against a dramatist who drew chiefly from native "humours," and continental inventions. That he was acquainted with Italian sufficiently appears from the very curious entry relating to Twelfth Night in Manningham's Diary, 1602; and I know not whether it has been observed that the name of one of his characters, Pistol, is taken from the Italian *pistólfo*, translated by Florio, ed. 1611, p. 384, "a roguing beggar, a cantler, an upright man that liveth by cosenage." There can be nõ reasonable doubt of the fact that Shakespeare was a well-informed man, but, as I have before stated, there is a strong probability in favour of Rowe's assertion, that he was removed from school before he had attained a great proficiency in the learned languages.

It would be a very difficult task to identify the exact position of the room in which Shakespeare was educated,* yet the subject is one worthy of local investigation. From an entry in the Corporation Books in 1595, it appears that the school had then been kept in the chapel of the guild, but from several entries in the Chamberlains' accounts I conclude this was only a temporary arrangement. In the

* The schoolmaster had a salary of £20 a year. "Memorandum, there is a vicare and a scolemaster that have a stipend of xx.*li.* by the yere graunted by the Kinge to eyther of them, and the bailief and burgesses of Stratford are to pay the same yerelie stipendes out of the landes that were geven them by the Kinge, and the Earle had the nominatinge and appoyntinge of them bothe, and nowe her Majestie."—*MS. at Carlton Ride.* In 1585, Sur Wylliam Gylbarte was assistant master at a salary of £10 per annum.

accounts for 1568, mention is made of *the scole*, *the olde scole*, and *the soller over the scole*. This last entry would alone seem to prove that the school was not then in the chapel, but in another building, perhaps adjoining it :—

The charge or receptes.

Item, of John Sadler for one chymney solde to hym which stode in the gylde kytchyn - - - - - - - - iij.*li.* x.*s.*

Allowance.

Inprimis, payd to Hugh Aunge for repayryng of the scole -	x.*s.*
Item, for dressyng and swepyng the scole house - -	viij.*d.*
Item, payd to Mr. Lewes for the Quenes carryage - -	xvj.*s.*
Item, payd to John Tyler for groundesellynge in the olde scole	ij.*s.*
Item, for wyne at the Bere - - - - -	ij.*s.*
Item, for takyng downe the soller over the scole - -	xij.*d.*
Item, payd to Mr. Tyler towardes the reparacion of the pyllorye,	xviij.*s.* viij.*d.*

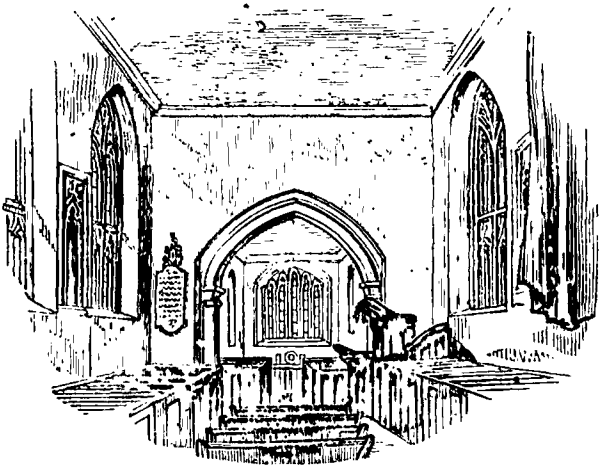
The passion of the multitude for the exhibition of personal relics of great men has led to the attribution of the title of "Shakespeare's desk" to an unwieldy article which may have been the schoolmaster's throne some two centuries ago. If every scholar had had so extensive a table for his initiatory literary labours, Stratford itself would scarcely have held the pupils and their desks. The supposititious relic has been perpetuated by Mr. Fairholt, who has, however, compensated for this want of authenticity by giving us a sketch of the schools as they were only some eight years ago, "approached by an antique external stair, roofed with tile, and up which the boys had ascended from the time of Shakespeare;" and lamentable it is that so characteristic a fragment of the olden Stratford should now be for ever lost. This author evidently adopts the most probable supposition that the occupation of the chapel as a school about 1594, mentioned in the record above quoted, was only temporary; and yet, were not my belief too well armed against the reception of personal allusions in Shakespeare's works, I should be almost inclined to admit the

possibility of a sly notice of his schoolmaster,* when Malvolio is described as most villanously cross-gartered, "like a pedant that keeps a school i' the church." The

* The locality of the schoolmaster's house in 1590 is seen from the following curious indenture:—

This indenture made the xxv.th daye of Merche, in the xxxij.th yere of the raigne of oure soveraigne Ladye Elizabeth, by the grace of God of England, France and Ireland Queene, defendor of the faithe, &c. Betwene the bailiff and burgesses of the boroughe of Stratford upon Avon in the com. of Warr. of thone partie, and Alexander Aspinall of the same towne and countye scholemaster of the other partie, Witnesseth that the seyd bailyffe and burgesses for divers good and reasonable consideracions them speciallye movinge, have demised and to ferme letten, and by these presentes doe demise and to ferme lett, unto the seyd Alexander Aspinall, all that theire tenemente and romes of howsinge scituate and beinge within the chapell yarde of Stratford afforeseyd, withe the cole howsse and garden theireunto adjoyned, which late were in the tenure or occupacion of Edwarde Tyler and Ales Burford wydo, To have and to hold the seyd tenemente, romes of howsinge, withe the cole-howse and garden afforeseyd, to the seyd Alexander Aspinall, his executors and assignes, frome the daye of the date hereof unto the full ende and terme of twentye and one yeares from thence next insuinge fully to be complete and ended, yeldinge and payinge therefore yerely duringe the seyd terme unto the seyd bailiffe and burgesses and their successors ffourtie shillinges of currante English money at the feastes of the Nativitie of St. John Baptist, St. Michell the archangell, the Nativitie of our Lord God, and the Annunciacion of the blessed Virgen Marye, by even porcions; Provided alweys that yf yt shall fortune the seyd yearely rente of ffourtie shillinges to be behinde and unpayd in parte or in all after any of the seyd feast dayes of payment in whiche yt ought to be payd by the space of tenne dayes (and lawfully demaunded) that then and frome thenceforth yt shall and maye be lawfull to and for the seyd bailiffe and burgesses and theire successors into the seyd demised premisses wholly to reenter and the same to have againe repossed and enjoye, as in their former estate, and the seyd Alexander Aspinall, his executors administrators and assignes, frome the same clerely to expell put out and remove, this present indenture of demise or any thinge herein conteyned to the contrarye thereof in any wise notwithstandinge. Provided alsoe that yf the seyd Alexander Aspinall his executors or administrators doe at any tyme hereafter bargaine sell asigne over or departe with his or their estate right title or interest in or to the demised premisses to any person or persons whatsoever, witheout the especiall license and consent of the seyd bailiffe and burgesses and their successors, or the more parte of them for the tyme beinge, first had and obteyned in writtinge (unlesse yt be the seyd bailiffe and burgesses and their successors) that then this presente indenture and everye clause sentence article and agrement herein conteyned, shall cease determine and become utterly voyd to all ententes and purposes whatsoever, any thinge herin conteyned or mencioned to the contrarye thereof in any wise notwithstandinge; and the seyd Alexander Aspinall covvenanteth and granteth, for himselfe his executors administrators and assignes, to and with the seyd bailiffe and burgesses and their successors by these presentes the seyd demised premisses with the appurtenaunces at his and their proper costes and charges shall well and sufficiently repayre mainteyne and kepe in all maner of reparacions, when and often as nead shall requier duringe the seyd terme, and the same soe well and sufficiently repayred maynteyned and kepte in the ende of the seyd terme shall leave and yeld up unto the seyd bailiffe and bur-

chapel of the Guild, close to the old town-hall, is a plain but good structure in the architectural style of the reign of



Interior of the Chapel of the Guild.

Henry VII. The chancel is of greater antiquity, and was apparently the only portion of the more ancient building suffered to remain when Sir Hugh Clopton rebuilt the chapel. In this building it has been supposed that Shakespeare received his education, and, however much that may be doubted, still is it connected with his history, for here has been from time immemorial a pew appropriated to the owner of New Place, and in that chapel Shakespeare after 1597 would listen to the ministers of the reformed religion.

When Shakespeare was a boy, the bailiff and aldermen of Stratford encouraged the exhibition of dramatic performances in their ancient town. The accounts of the chamberlains contain several notices of such performances, but there were no doubt many others not mentioned in those documents. Willis,* who was Shakespeare's contemporary, and born in

gesses and theire successors. In wittnes whereof to the one parte of this indenture remayninge withe the seyd Alexander Aspinall the seyd bailiffe and burgesses have put their comon seale, and to the other parte of the same indenture remayninge with the seyd bailiffe and burgesses the seyd Alexander Aspinall hath put his seale the daye and yere first above-written.

* Mount Tabor, 12mo. Lond. 1639, p. 110.

the same year as the poet, informs us that "when players of enterludes come to towne, they first attend the mayor, to enforme him what noble-mans servants they are, and so to get licence for their publique playing; and if the mayor like the actors, or would shew respect to their lord and master, he appoints them to play their first play before himselfe and the aldermen and common counsell of the city; and that is called the mayors play, where every one that will comes in without money, the mayor giving the players a reward as hee thinks fit, to shew respect unto them." We cannot infer from this curious notice that every company who obtained permission to play were so honoured by the mayor or bailiff, and there can be little danger in believing that no year passed in Stratford, during the youth of Shakespeare, without theatrical amusements. No one then can be at a loss to discover facilities in the way of the poet's imbibing a taste for the science in which he became so great a master; but there is a probability to be founded on entries in the accounts above mentioned, tending to exhibit Shakespeare's father as an especial patron of the stage.* The first companies who had the honour of publicly exhibiting their plays in the hall were so favoured when John Shakespeare was bailiff, in 1569, William being then five years of age, and in all likelihood a spectator at the performances. We hear no more of them till 1573, when Lord Leicester's players visited the town, and in 1576 two companies are mentioned, those of the Earls of Warwick and Worcester. It may also be mentioned that Stratford was frequently favoured with the appearance of shows and exhibitions, a circumstance perhaps recollected by Shakespeare, when,

* There can be no doubt that much depended in these matters on the personal taste of the bailiff. In 1617, notwithstanding the strict orders the corporation had issued against the performance of plays, the bailiff of the year gave his sanction to companies of players and showmen.

he ridiculed the passion of the English for sights of that nature. From that period till 1587, players seem constantly to have visited Stratford. In the year last mentioned occur two notices of the Queen's players, a company to which Shakespeare is known to have belonged in November, 1589, and we may submit, with considerable probability, that he was connected with it in the former year. I do not know whether the possible circumstance of his having previously joined one or more of the travelling provincial bodies of comedians has ever been noticed by any of his biographers, but there has been from time immemorial a tradition preserved at Leicester that Shakespeare performed in the Guildhall of that city. Certain it is that Leicester was a favorite town with our early actors, and Mr. Thompson, of that city, informs us that staples in the beams of the old hall are still pointed out as having been used by them for suspending their scenery.

The accounts of the Chamberlains, to which I have just referred, give us an insight into the manners of the times and a view of Stratford people and their habits in those days, not afforded by documents of a more imposing character. When we read that in the year 1564 two shillings were "payd for defasyng ymage in the chappell," a history is at once exposed of the spirit which actuated the local rulers, and the tendency of their crusade against the harmless monuments of the ancient belief, no exercise of taste being suffered to interfere with what was considered a religious duty. If we wished to bring Stratford to our minds as it existed in Shakespeare's time, we could not adopt a more royal road than a perusal of these accounts affords. There was the cucking-stool, that barbarous warning for female scolds, and there were, of course, the stocks. "He has sat in the stocks all night, poor gallant knave;" a punishment by no means unusual at Stratford, and curiously illustrated

by the MS. printed at p. 24. The entertainments given to Sir Thomas Lucy, and other persons of influence, unfold a system of conciliation unknown in modern times. Wine, cakes, and sugar, were provided "to make Syr Fowcke Grevell drynke;" and in 1598 the sum of £2 was paid him "for nothing!" Among the places of amusement the butts and bowling-alley are most frequently alluded to. Another source of minute information is afforded in the list of payments made to the Chamberlains for the privilege of having the "great bell" rung at deaths or funerals. Thus, in 1617, four-pence was paid "at the death of Thomas Quyniis child," Shakespeare Quiney, one of the poet's grandsons. Unfortunately no such accounts for the previous year have been preserved, or we might have expected to find a like memorial of the great dramatist. How often in these researches have we to record that the most interesting documents have perished!

Our readers will understand the force of these remarks far better by a perusal of some of the more curious notices exactly as they occur in the original account-books of the Chamberlains, still preserved at Stratford; and I have thought it better to give them in chronological order, and all of them together, rather than extract such passages separately as might be required for our discussions. They will, I think, be found extremely useful in many arguments in which the habits of Shakespeare's neighbours and contemporaries become subjects of careful analysis and consideration.

1543. [Accounts of Richard Coton and Thomas Gilbard, 22 Mar. 34 Hen. VIII.] Item, payd Whytley for kepyng the alter - iij.*s.* iij.*d.*
1545. Item, payd to Thomas Whytley for kepyng Sent Georg alter, viij.*d.*
Item, payd for scowryng Sent Georg harnes - - ij.*s.* x.*d.*
1547. Payd for scowryng Sent George harnes - - ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
Item, to Walter for rydyng Sent George - - - vj.*d.*
Item, to hym that bare the dragon - - - iiij.*d.*

1550. Payd for a book of the actes* - - - - - xv.*d.*

1555. *Money payed upon receyt.*

Imprimis, payed for the scouringe of the harnes and settinge hit on the mans backe - - - - - - ij.*s.* x.*d.*

It. for letheringes for the harnes. - - - viij.*d.*

It. for bearinge the dragon and wearinge seynt Gorges harnes, ij.*s.*

It. a dosyn of poyntes for the harnes - - - ij.*d.*

Item, payd for dressynge the dragon, and for bering the dragon, and weryng Seint George harnes on Holy Thursday - ij.*s.* viij.*d.*

Payd for gune powder - - - - - iiij.*d.*

Payd for scowrynge Seint George harnes - - - ij.*s.*

1556. Payd to iij. men for berynge the dragon and Sent George harnes, ij.*s.*

1569. Item, to Mr. Balyf that nowe ys† - - - xiiij.*s.*

Item, payd to the Quenes pleyers - - - - ix.*li.*

Item, for the Quenes provysyon - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Item, to the Erle of Worcesters pleers - - - xij.*d.*

Item, to Peter Starkye for undersettyng Mother Gylles howse, xij.*d.*

1570. Item, we praye allowaunce of money delivered to Mr. Shaxpere at sundrie times - - - - - - - vj.*li.*

Item, paied to Humfrey Getley for mendinge of the stoxe - xij.*d.*

Item, paied for the timber of the same stoxe - - - xij.*d.*

Item, paied to the smithe for iron work of the same stoxe - ij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Item, paid Viland for diginge of the plume trees - - - ij.*d.*

1572. To the Quenes provision - - - - - vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

1573. Paid the cutler for britchinge of a gune and makinge pynnes to the same - - - - - - - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*

Paid to Mr. Bayly for the Earle of Lecesters players - - v.*s.* viij.*d.*

1576. Paid Mr. Hill for the agrement with the informer havinge the benefitt of the statute for wearinge of cappes - - - x.*s.* viij.*d.*

Paid, for mendinge the docke stoole two elles - - - xij.*d.*

Paid, for the stoll and thinges to mende it withall - - vj.*d.*

Paid, for a cocke for to sett on the stoole - - - viij.*d.*

Geven my lord of Warwicke players - - - xvij.*s.*

Paid the Earle of Worceter players - - - - v.*s.* viij.*d.*

1577. Paid when the mouster was here for a gaune and halfe of sacke iiij.*s.*

Paide to Simon Bidile for dressinge the bowes at the mouster viij.*d.*

Paid to my lord of Leyster players - - - - xv.*s.*

Paid to my lord of Wosters players - - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

1578. Item, to John Smith for a pottell of wine and a quarterne of sugar for Sir Thomas Lucy - - - - - - xvj.*d.*

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* A copy of the Statutes, fol. Lond. 1543, is still preserved in the Council Chamber, and may be the book here alluded to.

† This entry relates to John Shakespeare, who was bailiff at the time.

1579. Paid to William Evans for scowringe of the George Armour - iiij.*d.*
Item, paid to my Lord Strainge men the xj.th day of February at the commaundement of Mr. Bayliffe - - - - - v.*s.*
Paid at the commaundement of Mr. Baliffe to the Countys of Essex plears - - - - - - - xiiij.*s.* vj.*d.*
1580. Paid for a drinking that was bestowed on them that bare the armor before the justices - - - - - - - xx.*d.*
Paid to the Earle of Darbyes players at the commaundement of Mr. Baliffe - - - - - - - viij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
1581. Paid to the Earle of Worcester his players - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Paid to the L. Bartlett his players - - - - iij.*s.* ij.*d.*
1582. Payed to Henry Russell for the Earle of Worcesters players - v.*s.*
1583. Yt ys agreed that the chamberleins shall pay Davy Jones xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* towardes his expenses at Whytsontyde last.
Payd to Mr. Alderman that he layd downe to the Lord Bartlite his players, and to a preacher - - - - - v.*s.*
Payd to the Lord Shandowes players - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
1584. For mendinge the bauldricke of the great bell - - iiij.*d.*
Paid for a quart of secke, a pottell of claret wyne, a quarterne of sugar, for Sir Thomas Lucy knight, the xij.th of Januarie, 1583 - ij.*s.* j.*d.*
20 May. A churche ayle graunted to be kept by the churchwarden.
Geven to my lord of Oxfordes pleers - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Geven to the Earle of Worceter pleers - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Geven to the Earle of Essex pleers - - - iij.*s.* viij.*d.*
1586. Paid for wine and sugar when Sir Thomas Lucie satt in comission for tipplers - - - - - - - xx.*d.*
Paide to Mr. Tiler for the pleyers* - - - v.*s.*
1587. Item, paid for mendinge of a forme that was broken by the Quenes players - - - - - - xvj.*d.*
Item, gyven to the Quenes players - - - xx.*s.*
Item, gyven to my Lo. of Essex players - - v.*s.*
Item, gyven to therle of Leycester his playcrs - - x.*s.*
Item, gyven to another companye - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, gyven to my Lo. of Staffordes men - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
1591. Paid for wyne, suger, and cakes, to make syr Fowcke Grevell drynke, xviij.*d.*
1592. Payd to the Queenes players - - - - xx.*s.*
1593. Paid more for kidding* woode in the chappell orcharde - x.*d.*
Paide unto Roger Welshe for carrying three loades of turfes to make the buttes - - - - - - - ij.*s.*
Paid unto the Queenes players - - - - xx.*s.*
1594. It. receved of Mr. John Gybbes for elmes in his orchard in Henley Lane - - - - - - - xl.*s.*

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* Tying into faggots.

Itm. at the eatinge of Mr. Grevilles bucke the kepers fee and horse hire - - - - - - - - xxx.*s.* vj.*d.*

It. a bankett at the Beare for Mr. Grevill - - xxxiij.*s.* ij.*d.*

It. for peares and walnuttes at Mr. Grevill returne from Scottlande, ij.*s.*

1595. Item, for a barne in Elye Streete decayed * with fire . . iiij.*s.*

It. of Robert Willsonne for the Crowne wasted with fire, xxxiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

It. for sacke and clarett wine for Sir Thomas Lucie and my ladie and Mr. Sherife at the Swanne - - - - - iij.*s.*

It. paid att the Swanne for a quart of sacke and a quartern of sugar † burned for Sr Thomas Lucie - - - - . xvj.*d.*

He prayeth allowance of liij.*s.* iiij.*d.* for the rent of the tuythe of Litle Wilmecote, for that he coulde not receave yt of Mr. William Underhill.

1596. Item, receaved of Mr. Thomas Combs and Mr. Richard Quyney, farmers to Raphe Hubande esquier - - - - xxxiiij.*li.*

Julii 16 and 17, paid the Queens plairs ‡ - - - 10.*s.*

1597. Item pd. the 20. of January a°. 1596 for wine and sugar that Mr. Rogers bestowed on Sir Thomas Lucye and other gent. - - vj.*s.* vj.*d.*

Payd to Gibbart Charnok the 20th of January 1596, for a quart of sake and a quartern of suger bestowed on Sur Edward Grivill at Mr. Quinyes - - - - - - - xvj.*d.*

And a quart of clarret wine bestowd more the same tyme . x.*d.*

Payd for a sugerlofe to send to Sur Foke Grivill the 20. of January 11 li. 9 ounces at xvj.*d.* a pound - - - xv.*s.* v.*d.*

Payd to a man at Mr. Lewes by the appoyntment of Mr. Bayly Sturly for the shew of the sytty of Norwiche - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Payd to Edward Aynge the 29th of May, 1597, in mony, to pay for wine and suger bestowed of Sur Edward Grivill at the Swann, vj.*s.* x.*d.*

Payd to Mr. Jefferis the 5th of August, 1597, for mony layd out on Mr. Underhill shut the som of - - - lvj.*s.* iij.*d.*

Payd to Mr. Bayly Sturly which he layd out to Mr. Ambrose Couper for the chamber shut agaynst Mr. Underhill at Hillary terme, xxix.*s.* viij.*d.*

More to him for iij. dayes jurny for Thomas Vigers to serve Mr. Underhill at Banbury, at Coventry, and at his oune house by Coventry - - - - - - - iiij.*s.*

Payd to him for vj. dayes jurny to London to make othe agaynst Mr. Underhill and his man - - - - - xij.*s.*

Payd for foure companyes of players - - - xix.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Payd to Edward Aynge for a quart of sake and a quartern of suger bestowed on Sur Thomas Lusy and Mr. Burgon at the Swann, xxj.*d.*

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* In the old sense of ruined or destroyed. "Comes to decay a day's work," Cymbeline, i. 6.

† See 1 Henry IV. act i. sc. 2.

‡ It would appear from a very brief note in the paper from which this is taken, that the players of the Earl of Derby and Lord Ogle also visited Stratford the same year.

141739

It. pd. to Mr. Rymesley, a straunger taken by the Turke, at Mr. Baliffes appointment - - - - - - v.*s.*
It. paide to Ravons for sweepinge thee bridge - - iiij.*s.*

Reseved by me William Wyatt for the usse of the camber this yeare, 1598.

Imprimis Hamlet Sadlar - - - - xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Mr. Quine - - - - - - xxvj.*s.* iiij.*d.*
July Shawe - - - - - xij.*s.*
Mr. Jhon Sadlar - - - - - xvj.*s.*
Of Mr. Combes and Mr. Quine - - - xxxiiij.*li.*

Accounts 1598.

Pd. to Watton the smith for mending the flitte of the clocke - iiij.*d.*
To Jhon Whittcoott iiij. dayes worcke at 9*d.* daye - - iij.*s.*
Bowght of Hemmings iij. qrs. and halfe of lime - - - xiiij.*s.*
Bald Hughes for xj. dayes at 9*d.* - - - viij.*s.* iij.*d.*

The acountt of Wyllyam Wyatt Chamberlen in this yeare, 1598.

Pd. to Mr. Smith for wyne and suger when my Lady Grevell cam to see our sport - - - - - - ij.*s.* ij.*d.*
And for iij. cakes the same time - - - vj.*d.*
Pd. to Littell Smith for mending the beme of the clocke - iij.*d.*
Pd. to Sore Fowle Grevell for nothing - - - xl.*s.*

Leed out abowtt the gome stoll.

Pd. to Towell for iij. dayes worke of him and his sone - v.
Pd. to Thomas Hornebe for ij. pines of iveri - - ij.*s.* j.*d.*
Pd. to Mr. Willson for stapols lock and hinges - - vij.*d.*
To Grimshawes man for a plank to make whelles - - ij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Pd. to Cowell for a planke to make stoll - - - ij.*d.*

The acountt of Raffe Lord, 1599.

Imprimis the resetes as folloeth.

Hamlet* Sadler - - - - - xxvj.*s.* viij.
Mr. Richard Quine - - - - - xxvj.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Wydowe Bathawaye - - - - - iiij.*s.*

annuall rents.

Of Mr. Quine - - - : - - xij.*d.*

1600. Item, for a pottell of sack and a pottell of claret and suger and symneles and cakes for the justices - - - - iij.*s.* xj.*d.*
It. beestowed in wine and suger at Mr. Sadler his howse - x.*s.*

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* Spelt *Amhlett* in the accounts for 1602.

1601. Rd. back againe of Mr. Richard Qwyne the 9th of Januarii a° 1600 of the xx.*s.* which hee had of mee - - - - iiij.*d.*
Mydsomer tearme. Payd to Mr. Henrye Wylson, which was sent up to Mr. Queneye by on of Mr. Cloptones mene to London - ij.*li.*
1602. It. pd. then for a pinte of sacke and suger at Mr. Bayleefes - viij.*d.*
Item, dd.* unto Mr. Greene at London the 8. day of June - x.*s.*
Item, paid for two quarts of sacke and two quarts of Rinnishe† wyne of that Mr. Bayleefe did give unto Mr. Varney and to Mr. Wm. Combes, when the roggs weare taken at Clifford barne - - iiij.*s.*
// Item, paid ffor a galland and a pinte of sacke and a galland of clarrett wynne, beeinge geeven to Sr Edward Greevyll and Mr. Wm. Combes, Mr. Varney, the second of September, 1602 - - vij.*s.* ij.*d.*
It. for a statute book to Mrs. Queeny - - - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Paid for two kegges of sturgen and their cariage from London, xliij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Presentment made Jan. 13th, 1603-4.

Item, we do present the greatest part of the inhabytants of this towne for wearing theyr repariell contrary to the stattut.

1604. Paid to iiij. men that did keep out of the towne Coventrie men for iij. dayes at the great fair - - - - xj.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Paid to Mr. Baliefe for iij. proclamations concerning the altering of the name England to Britaine and the seale, xxxj° of Octob. iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Paid to Mr. Baliefe for fishe that the maisters had when they went to welcome Sir Tho. Lucie into the countrie. Novemb. xvj. vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
1606. Shotery. Mr. Thomas Combe and Mr. Anthony Nashe for the tithe corne and privy tithes - - - - - xxxiiij.*li.*
Item to Spenser for amendinge the chappell clocke, and to Watton for the ironwoorke aboute the same clocke - - xvj.*d.*
Item to Greene for makinge the bowlinge aley - - xx.*s.*
Item, for four loades of turves for the bowlinge alley - iiij.*s.*
Item, to Spenser for joistes for the scolehouse and for worke about the same - - - - - - iiij.*s.* ix.*d.*
Item, for wine that was geven to Mr. William Combes and the Ladi Puckeringe when the were at the colleige - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, to Richard Greene and Harrington for watchinge the night after the bell was caste - - - - - xij.*d.*
Item, to Spenser for timber for the bell frame and for plankes for the steple floore and his woorke and the bell stocke . iij.*li.* xvj.*s.* vj.*d.*
1608. Paied Richard Stanell for tilling the fre skole - - xxv.*s.*
Paied Mistres Qwenye for wine to the chamber in making Mr. Baker and Mr. Smith frindes - - - - iiij.*s.*

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* That is, delivered.
† Rhenish. Cf. Merch. Ven. i. 2; Hamlet, i. 4.

Payd for a pottell of sack and claret wyne that was sent downe to the Bear to Sir Edward Grevill - - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Paid at Mrs. Queenes when Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Wright were maid frendes - - - - - - - v.*s.* ij.*d.*

Paid for three crab-tree seates set in the chappels orchard - xij.*d.*

The second of Januarie spent in wyne at the eating of the doe at Mr. Balyfes, in muscadyne a pottel, in sack iij. quarts, and in claret wyne ij. gawnes, the summe of all - - - - xj.*s.* viij.*d.*

1610. Paid to Mr. Wilson balyfe which he gave to them that killed two buckes for their fees - - - - - - xij.*s.*

Paid at the eating of the buck at Mrs. Queenys - - xlviij.*s.* xj.*d.*

1611. Bestowed in sack and sugar upon Mr. Sherife - - xiiij.*d.*

Paid to goodman Greene for worke done about the bowleing allye, iiij.*s.* vj.*d.*

Paid for wyne, sugar, pippyns, and bear, bestowed upon the justices when they surveyed the hie way in the bridgtowne - - v.*s.*

Paid for beesomes for the Guyld hall and councell house - j.*d.*

Paid to the roper beyond the bridge for a new rope to wynd up the great poyze of the clocke and two roppe for the great bell - iij.*s.* j.*d.*

Paid for a pottell of claret wyne sent to Mr. Greens to a gentilman of London their - - - - - - xvj.*d.*

Paid for making cleane the magistrates swerd - - xij.*d.*

Paid for iij. rafters used about the house that must be for the scholemaister - - - - - - xviij.*d.*

Paid to Mr. Combes for x. thrave of straw - - x.*s.*

Paid Julyne Shaw for xj. hundred and xx. of tyles, and one dosen of crestes - - - - - - xxx.*s.* vj.*d.*

To Julyne Shaw for ij. peèces of elme that made iiij. mantle-trees, x.*s.*

1612. Payd for a lock for the stockes - - - - o. j.*s.* j.*d.*

Payd for sack and clarryt wyne which was sent to Mr. William Combes - - - - - - o. v.*s.* j.*d.*

1613. *Out of Tho. Andrews house.*

Mr. Adrian Quieny is to pay to the almespeople iij.*s.* iiij.*d.* a quarter in the year - - - - - - xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

Mrs. Queeny payeth and saith that hir sonne shall pay out of a close at the ffarme steele everie year to the almesfolkes - - ij.*s.*

Of Adrian Queeny out of two tenementes in the old towne - ij.*d.*

Paid Aprill the first at the signe of the Bear, when the justices surveied the armour, for a pottell of sacke and one of claret wyne, and halfe a pound of sugar - - - - - iiij.*s.* ij.*d.*

Paid to Watton for setting up the hour glasse - - iiij.*d.*

Paid to Henrie Bloome for a flaske, a twichboxe, and a string - iij.*s.*

Paid to him for keeping the armour for six monthes - v.*s.*

Paid to him for looking to the armour the day that the trayned souldyers did shew - - - - - - - xij.*d.*

Paid to Arthur Duckes for mending the stone bridge - vj.*d.*

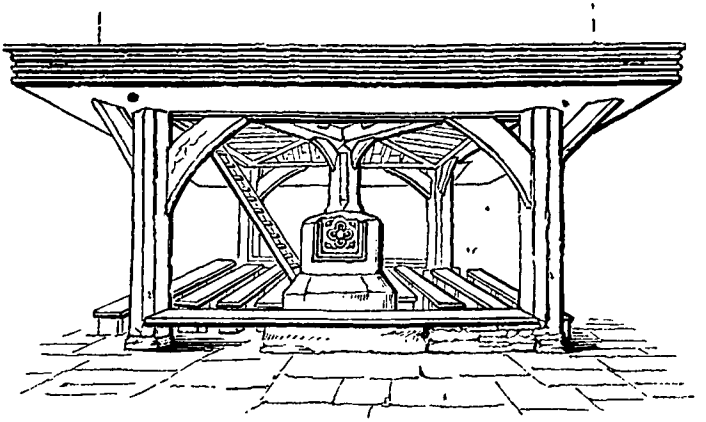
1614. Mis. Elyzabeth Quiney j. tenement - - - - x.*s.*
Mr. Combs and Mr. Antony Nash to pay for theyr tythe - xxxiiij.*li.*
It. rec. of Kempe of Warwick - - - - xxx.*s.*
Item, payed for pottell of sack and on pottell of clarrett wine gevene to the Fosteres at the shewe of the trayned men - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, to Mr. John Green for hetting a copy of Mr. Will. Combs his will - - - - - - - - xviij.*d.*
And for Mr. Watts assistant schoolemayster his rent pardoned him - - - - - - - - vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
1615. Paide for ij. hookes of wood and nailes to set them on the wall at the Yelde Hall dore to lay the fier-hooke uppon to be in areadinesse, ij.*d.*
Paied for heare to make parget for the walles - - ij.*d.*
1616. Mris. Elyzabeth Quinie j. tenement - - - vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Of Mris. Quinie her fine - - - - - v.*li.*
Payed to Thomas Quinie for wine and shuger - - ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
Payed to Mris. Naish for a banket - - - - iiij.*s.*
1617. *Receaved for the grat bell.*
Receaved at the death of Mistris Comes - - - iiij.*d.*
Receaved at the death of Thomas Quyniis child - - iiij.*d.*
Receaved at the death of Mr. Lane - - - iiij.*d.*
Receaved at the death of Mr. Collins - - - iiij.*d.*
Receaved at the death of Mr. Adrane Quynie - - iiij.*d.*
Allowed Mr. Bayliffe which was given to a company that came with a shew to the towne - - - - iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Paid for making clane the bowling ally and laing up the rodes, ij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Paid for mending Mr. Combes gabell - - - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Item, per Mr. Bayliff's apoyntment, to a company of players - v.*s.*
For a quart of sack sent Mr. Byfeld - - - - j.*s.*
For ij. trees for the cookstoole - - - - xj.*s.*
For a quart of sack sent to Mr. Cooper, a preacher - o. o. j.*s.*
Payde for a coppie of Mr. John Comes will - - ix.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Payde for to dosen of silke poyntes to give to the boyes at the takyng of possession of Mr. Greens howse - - - xij.*d.*
Payd to John Sounes mayde for making haye - - iiij.*d.*
Payde for three pintes of sack which was beestowed of Mr. Langsonne the first nyght hee came - - - - xviij.*d.*
Payde on the morrowe at the halle when hee toke his oath, to welcome hym, for foure quartes of muskadine - - iiij.*s.* viij.*d.*
Payde for a quarte of sacke and a quart of clarett wyne beestowed of Mr. Harris for his sermon made heire - - - xx.*d.*
1622. Payd for two quartes of sacke that was sent to a preacher to the Licon that preache heare - - - - - ij.*s.*
Payd to the kinges players for not playinge in the hall - - vj.*s.*
Payd Mr. Quyny that was given hime by the compinie - xxxv.*s.*
1624. Of Mr. Hall at Ladi day - - - - 8 10 6

To Watton for a chaine for the booke which Mr. Aspinall gave to the scoole - - - - - - - - iiij.*d.*

For rushes for the chamber* - - - - - - vj.*d.*

Given Mr. Hall in ernest for the tyth - - - x.*s.*

1625. A quart of sacke sent to Mr. Smythes at the Crose† for Mr. Warde the precher - - - - - - - - j.*s.*



Old Market Cross, now removed.

1628. It. to Thomas Hathaway for bred for aight communyanes - 0 4 0

It. to Richard Chastell for a sugar lofe gyfen to Sr. Thomas Lusy, 0 19 0

A note of what mony hath bine receved since the 21. *of September*, 1630, *by my father for the poore, for swearing, and other defaults.*

It. of one Stubes, a poore man, for swearing - - 0 6

It. of a shumaker for tipling - - - - - 1 0

It. John Wodward for swearing and abusing the constables - 2 0

It. of Mr. Quiny for swearing - - - - 1 0

Mr. Anth. Smith his accompt for money for swearing rec. by him, 1631.

It. paid for mending the houses that they brauke when they tooke Newell and Gypsy - - - - - - 1 4

1695. April 16. Pd. for ale at the White Lyon thankgiveing day - 1 02 0

Payd Shakespear Hart a bill for glasceing the chappell, Mr. Crofts house, Mr. Wills house, the alms houses, and Market House 2 11 11

1717. May 29th. Gave the morris dansers per Mr. Mayors order - 5*s.*

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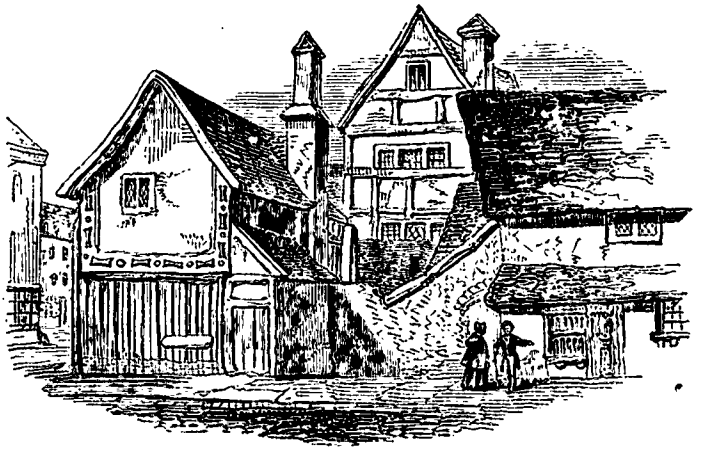
* "Is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept?" Taming of the Shrew, iv. 1.

† The accompanying woodcut represents the remains of the ancient market cross, used partly as a support for a small structure, as they appeared some years ago. The base of the original stone cross is now preserved in the garden of Mr. Heritage, a builder at Stratford.

The present appearance of Stratford is essentially different to what it was when these accounts were indited. The ugly and tasteless brick cottages of modern days have taken the place of the picturesque structures of Shakespeare's age; yet a few years since were there buildings remaining in Henley street, such as the poet himself might have been



Ancient Houses in Henley Street, 1820.

familiar with. Those represented in the accompanying woodcut were taken down when the new market-house was erected in 1821; and others are exhibited on the first page of this book. It is deeply to be regretted that characteristic memorials of this kind should have been suffered to be destroyed. Their place is seldom occupied in a way to make us forget the change, independently of the associations that are thus for ever lost.

More than a century elapsed after Henley street had been the scene of Shakespeare's youth, before any one recorded the trade that he was originally destined to follow. If we were asked for the best evidence on this subject, the opinion of the parish clerk in 1693 is undoubtedly entitled to the

preference (supported by Aubrey's random history), "that this Shakespear was formerly in this towne bound apprentice to a butcher." Rowe's assertion that he followed his father's occupation, and dealt in wool, is by no means at variance with this presumed fact. I am not prepared to assent to its truth, but shall be glad if any one will produce better authorities for a contrary opinion. There seems at least to be no reason against it on the ground of disparity of social position, for one of the bailiffs of the town was a butcher, and Shakespeare's sister married a hatter.* Mr. Collier follows Malone in considering there is sufficient internal evidence in Shakespeare's plays to warrant the belief that he was employed in the office of an attorney after he had quitted the free-school. He says, "proofs of something like a legal education are to be found in many of his plays, and it may be safely asserted that they do not occur anything like so frequently in the dramatic productions of his contemporaries." Mr. Collier's opinion is entitled to great consideration; but surely the frequent and correct use Shakespeare made of such terms may have been readily taught by the numerous legal transactions in which his parents were implicated.† If biographers of our poet are to accept what is termed the internal evidences of his history to be found in his sonnets and dramas, any given problem might be solved, or any desired result might be obtained. There is not a technical term in Shakespeare's plays the use of which may not be accounted for in some such manner. But another conjecture of Mr. Collier's is more probable. "He had been in his younger yeares," says Aubrey, "a

* Richard Quiny, father of Thomas Quiny, Shakespeare's son-in-law, was a mercer. This appears from a deed dated 16 June, 38 Eliz. 1596, preserved in the Council Chamber.

† The supposed allusion to Shakespeare in Nash's epistle to Menaphon, 1587, is obviously founded on an incorrect interpretation of the passage, and is certainly no evidence whatever in favour of Malone's opinion.

schoolmaster in the countrey;" and this is explained on the supposition that he had been employed by the master of the free-school to aid him in the instruction of the younger boys. We know from several writers that such a course was not unusual, and Dr. Forman tells us of something similar respecting himself.* Be this as it may, and were Shakespeare really an able scholar, it is probable education was not considered so essential by his father, for Judith Shakespeare was unable to write her own name. The fac-simile here given is copied from a deed executed in December, 1611, in the possession of Mr. Wheler.

We have thus traced Shakespeare, as well as our sources of information will permit, through the first two stages of life, in his nurse's arms, and then the "whining schoolboy, with his satchel and shining morning face." At eighteen years of age he entered on the next,—

> ———And then the lover,
> Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
> Made to his mistress' eyebrow,

the dark eyebrow of Anne Hathaway, a lovely maiden of the picturesque hamlet of Shottery, her cottage within a walk of

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* "Howe Simon became a scolmaster before he was eighteen yers old. Simon, percevinge his mother wold doe nothinge for him, was dryven to great extremity and hunger, gave of to be a scoller any longer for lacke of maintenance, and at the priorie of St. Jilles, wher he himself was firste a scoller, ther became he a scolmaster, and taught som thirty boies, and their parentes among them gave him moste parte of his diet. And the money he gote he kept, to the some of som 40*s.*, and after folowinge when he had bin scolmaster som halfe yere and had 40*s.* in his purse, he wente to Oxford for to get more lerninge, and soe left of from being scolmaster."—*MS. Ashmole* 208.

Stratford. To her, most probably, were the earliest efforts of Shakespeare's muse addressed, in terms such as these:

> If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
> Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy *Will*,
> And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
> Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.

and his love-suit was not rejected. The espousals of the lovers were celebrated in the summer of 1582. In those days betrothment or contract of matrimony often preceded actual marriage,—

> A contract of eternal bond of love
> Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands,
> Attested by the holy close of lips,
> Strengthened by interchangement of your rings;
> And all the ceremony of this compact
> Seal'd in my function by my testimony.

We need not hesitate in believing that this ceremony was passed through by Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway, and we have the direct testimony of an author of 1543 that in some places it was regarded in all essential particulars as an actual marriage.* Provided marriage was celebrated in a reasonable time, no criminality could be alleged after the contract had been made. This opinion is well illustrated by a passage in the Winter's Tale, act i, sc. 2, expressive of disgust at one who "puts to *before her troth-plight.*" Shakespeare's nuptials took place in the latter part of the year 1582, and "on the granting of licences, bond is to be taken that there is no impediment of pre-contract, consanguinity, &c."† The bond which was given on the occasion of Shakespeare's intended marriage is still preserved at

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* See Brand's Popular Antiquities, ed. 1841, ii. 57. Compare Claudio's speech in Measure for Measure, act i. sc. 3.

† Jacob's New Law Dictionary, fol. Lond. 1762, sig. 5 P.

Worcester, and I here give a copy of it, carefully taken from the original document. There is no peculiarity to be observed in it, nor can I agree with Mr. Collier in admitting "that the whole proceeding seems to indicate haste and secrecy." In fact, the bond is exactly similar to those which were usually granted on such occasions, and several others of a like kind are to be seen in the office of the Worcester registry. It is necessary in these discussions to pay attention to the ordinary usages of the period, and the more minutely we examine them, the less necessity will there be in this case for suggesting any insinuation against the character of the poet.*

Noverint universi per præsentes nos ffulconem Sandells de Stratford in comitatu Warwici agricolam, et Johannem Rychardson ibidem agricolam, teneri et firmiter obligari Ricardo Cosin generoso et Roberto Warmstry notario publico in quadraginta libris bonæ et legalis monetæ Angliæ solvend. eisdem Ricardo et Roberto hæred. execut. vel assignat. suis, ad quam quidem solucionem bene et fideliter faciend. obligamus nos et utrumque nostrum per se pro toto et in solid. hæred. executor. et administrator. nostros firmiter per præsentes sigillis nostris sigillat. Dat. 28 die Novem. anno regni dominæ nostræ Eliz. Dei gratia Angliæ, ffranc. et Hiberniæ reginæ, fidei defensor. &c. 25°

The condicion of this obligacion ys suche, that if hereafter there shall not appere any lawfull lett or impediment, by reason of any precontract, consangui[ni]tie, affinitie, or by any other lawfull meanes whatsoever, but that William Shagspere one thone partie, and Anne Hathwey, of Stratford in the dioces of Worcester, maiden, may lawfully solemnize matrimony together, and in the same afterwardes remaine and continew like man and wiffe, according unto the lawes in that behalf provided: and, moreover, if there be not at this present time any action, sute, quarrell or demaund, moved or depending before any judge, ecclesiasticall or temporall, for and concerning any suche lawfull lett

* Susanna Shakespeare, his eldest daughter, was born in May, 1583. The truth of what I have advanced in the text will appear from the following entries in the Stratford register, the same year in which Shakespeare was married: 1582, June 14, Robert Hawle and Jone Atford; bapt. Nov. 5, 1582, Elizabeth, daughter to Robert Hawle. Marr. 1582, Oct. 14, John Smith and Mary Masonne; bapt. Jan. 22, 1582-3, John sonne to John Smith. Mr. Knight's opinion on the subject is fully confirmed by the evidence here adduced. It may be added, that illegitimacy is always carefully noted in the register by the addition of *bastard* or *notha*.

or impediment: and, moreover, if the said William Shagspere do not proceed to solemnizacion of mariadg with the said Anne Hathwey without the consent of hir frindes: and also, if the said William do, upon his owne proper costes and expenses, defend & save harmles the right reverend Father in God, Lord John Bushop of Worcester, and his offycers, for licencing them the said William and Anne to be maried together with once asking of the bannes of matrimony betwene them, and for all other causes which may ensue by reason or occasion therof, that then the said obligacion to be voyd and of none effect, or els to stand and abide in full force and vertue.

No entry of Shakespeare's marriage occurs in the Stratford register, and he must therefore have been married elsewhere in the diocese of Worcester, unless we suppose that when the copy of that register was made in 1600, the original entries not being now extant, some may have been accidentally omitted. This conjecture is mentioned with diffidence, for the authenticity of every page of the register up to that period is attested by the signatures of the vicar and churchwardens. It is also possible he was married at a village where the early registers have been lost, for a letter I addressed to the clergy of the parishes in Warwickshire, where those as early as 1582 are preserved, did not succeed in producing the desired information.

The subsidy rolls mention the Hathaways as residing at Shotterey before the middle of the sixteenth century,* and also a John Hathewey of Olde Stretforde, assessed in 1549 in goods of the value of x.*li.* In a subsidy roll of 1593,

* The earliest notice of the name I have met with occurs in a MS. of the seventeenth century, in the collection of the late Captain Saunders,—Fuit carta per Willelmum Hathewy facta Willelmo Archer clerico de terris in Overton quæ jacent inter terram Willelmi Gill ex una parte, et terram Willelmi le Archer ex altera parte, quam emit de Rogero Coyle, data anno Domini 1301, et anno Ed. primi xxix?

John Hathwaye of Olde Stratforde is assessed on goods of the value of iij.*li.*; and a will dated 1601 mentions Thomas Hathaway, son of Margaret Hathaway of Old Stratford, then deceased. Many mistakes have arisen in considering these families, but there can be little doubt of the fact that Anne Hathaway was the daughter of a person who is described in the Stratford register as *Ricardus Hathaway alias Gardner de Shotery*. Rowe says that her father was "a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford," and the circumstance of his being the first to record the maiden name of Shakespeare's wife, shows that he had had access to a correct source of information. Two children at least of this Richard Hathaway were born before the Stratford register commences (1558), Bartholomew and Anne. Bartholomew Hathaway,* who afterwards (April, 1610) possessed the Shottery estate, died in 1624, and one of the overseers of his will was Dr. Hall, Shakespeare's son-in-law. Lady Barnard, in her will dated 1669, mentions "her kinsman Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford," whom I suppose to have been a grandson of Richard Hathaway of Shottery, settled at Stratford, and nephew of

Anne Shakespeare. The John Hathaway of Shottery mentioned in the Stratford register in 1626 and 1628, was one of the sons of Bartholomew just alluded to. In 1590,

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* In a Subsidy Roll, 16 April, 19 Jac. I. 1621, occur the following assessments,—

Old Stratford cum membris.

William Combe esq. in terr.	xx.*li.*	iiij.*li.*
Thomas Combe gen. in terr.	iiij.*li.*	xvj.*s.*
Anthony Nash gen. in bonis	iiij.*li.*	x*s.* viij.*d.*
Bartholomewe Hathaway in terr.	xx.*s.*	iiij.*s.*

Joan Hathaway, the widow of Richard, is found in the list of the customary tenants in the manor of Shottery, as holding land there at a rent of £1 13*s.* 4*d.*, with fines and heriots,—"Johanna Hatheway vidua tenet per copiam unum mess. et duas virgat. terræ et dim. cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum xxxiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* fin. et harr." But in this inquiry it should be recollected that Shottery was in the parish of Stratford, a circumstance which Malone has not sufficiently considered. This fact will clear up part of his account of the Hathaways.

Several particulars of Richard Hathaway's family may be gathered from the registers of Stratford. Among the baptisms, 1559, August 6, Richard Hathaway, and Jan. 4, 1561-2, Richardus filius Richardi Hathaway alias Gardner. If these were the children of the same parents, the first one had probably died in the interval which elapsed between the two baptisms. Again, in the baptisms, Oct. 22, 1563, Caterina filia Richardy Hathaway alias Gardner; May 9, 1566, Johanna filia Richardi Hathaway alias Gardner de Shotery; April 12, 1569, Thomas the sonne of Richard Hathaway; Feb. 3, 1574-5, John son to Richard Hathaway; Nov. 30, 1578, William sonne to Richard Hathaway of Shottrey. The registry of the Court of Record contains the following note of an action he brought against Robert Milles for debt: 7 Dec. 6 Eliz. 1563, Ricardus Hathewey queritur versus Robertum Milles in placito debiti. The registers also contain other notices of persons of the same name, e. g. bapt. June 13, 1562, Thomas filius Gulielmi Hathaway de Bushopton; Dec. 14, 1573, Richard sonne to John Hathaway; March 17, 1576-7, Margret daughter to William Hathaway; Sept. 29, 1577, Anne daughter to Thomas Hathaway; Dec. 29, 1579, Elizabeth daughter to Thomas Hathaway; Nov. 1, 1582, Rose daughter to Thomas Hathaway; Jan. 14, 1583-4, Annys daughter to Bartholmew

Hathaway; Feb. 8, 1585-6, John sonne to Bartholmew Hathaway; Sept. 21, 1586, Thomas sonne to Thomas Hathaway; March 8, 1589-90, Edmund sonne to Bartholmew Hathaway; Sept. 15, 1612, Alice filia John

Hathawaye de Shotterye. Among the burials, April 13, 1558, John sonne to William Hathaway; June 4, 1560, Ales Hathaway.* Malone discovered that William Wilson, an alderman of Stratford, was married in 1580 to Anne Hathaway of Shottery, so Shakespeare's wife had a namesake in her native village. The scene of the poet's love-suit,

Anne Hathaway's Cottage, from an Etching by Rider, 1825.

* A vast number of similar notices might be collected, but it will be found they tend to the conclusion here arrived at. In the registry of the Court of Record, under the date of 21 Dec. 29 Eliz., occurs this entry, "contin. actio inter Johannem Hathawey quer. et Tho. Hathawey def. in placito debiti," one Hathaway proceeding against another for the recovery of a debt. In a list of "the bakers that breake the sisse in bread," Sept. 1615, is Richard Hatheway,

the residence of the fair object of his early affection, is still pointed out at Shottery, and was undoubtedly the abode of the Hathaways in Shakespeare's time, then a large and well-appointed yeoman's house, now divided into three cottages. It continued in the possession of the Taylors, lineal descendants of the Hathaways, till within the last few years, and the wife of the present occupier of the middle cottage is a grand-daughter of John Hathaway Taylor.

The late Captain Saunders discovered two precepts in the papers of the Court of Record at Stratford, dated in 1566, which appear to exhibit Richard Hathaway and John Shakespeare on friendly terms. These precepts were issued on the same day on which the brief abstracts are dated in the registry of the court, and while the plaintiffs are respectively the same in the abstracts and precepts, the name of John Shakespeare is substituted in each instance in the latter for that of Richard Hathaway. Although I have not met with any similar instances, yet the only method of explanation is to conclude that Shakespeare became security for Hathaway. It appears that the distringas in each case was afterwards withdrawn.

11 Sept. 8 Eliz. Johannes Page queritur versus Ricardum Hatheway de placito detencionis &c. ad valenc. octo librarum.—Johanna Byddoll queritur versus Ricardum Hatheway de placito detencionis &c. ad valenc. xj.*li.*

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fined xij.*d.*; he is also mentioned in a tole-book dated 1646, and a person of the same name is found in a court-roll of the manor of Stratford, 1685. The receipts of the chamberlains of Stratford for 1644, include, "Bridgstreet Ward, Mrs. Hathaway for the Crowne, 00. 08. 04." A family of the name of Hathaway resided at Warwick, as may be gathered from the following entry in the parish register of St. Nicholas,—"1583, Julii; undecimo die hujus mensis solemnizatum fuet matrimonium inter Johannem Large et Magdalenam Hathaway hujus parothia." The register of Aston Cantlowe mentions the marriage of John Hathaway in 1609-10, "the vj. day of ffebruary was maried John Hathaway and Anne Wheyham." Mr. Wheler possesses a MS. entitled, "The order of the fyldes and medows belungynge to Shotterey, and how many acres the farmer showd have lyeng and fletyng," 1636, in which the name of John Hathaway occurs as having been present when the order was made. George Hathewey, of Billesley, is mentioned in the muster for 1569, in the State Paper Office.

Stratford } Preceptum est servientibus ad clavem quod distr.' seu unus
Burgus. } vestrum distr. Johannem Shakespere per omnia bona et catalla sua, ita quod sit apud proximam curiam de recordo tent. ibidem ad respondend. Johanni Pagge de placito debiti, &c. Datum sub sigillo meo xj.mo die Septembris, anno regni Dominæ Elizabethæ, Dei gracia Angl. Franc. et Hibern. reginæ, fidei defenc. &c. octavo.

Stratford } Preceptum est servientibus ad clavem quod distr. seu unus
Burgus. } vestrum distr. Johannem Shakespere per omnia bona et catalla sua, ita quod sit apud proximam curiam de recordo tent. ibidem ad respondendum Johanni Byddele de placito debiti, &c. Datum sub sigillo meo xj.mo die Septembris, anno regni Dominæ Elizabethæ, Dei grac. Angl. Franc. et Hibern. reginæ, fidei defenc. &c. octavo.

This evidence is very important in the question that has been raised respecting the father of Anne Hathaway. The intimacy which probably existed between Richard Hathaway and John Shakespeare at once explains the means through which the two families became connected. The bond sufficiently proves that the marriage must have taken place with the consent of the Hathaways, and the bride's father was most likely present when Sandels and Richardson executed the bond, for one of the seals has the initials R. H. upon it. There can be little doubt that the connexion also met with the approval of Shakespeare's parents, for there was no disparity of means or station to occasion their dissent, and the difference between their ages was not sufficient to raise it into any reasonable obstacle. Nothing can be more erroneous than the conclusions generally drawn from the marriage-bond. Anne Hathaway is there described as of Stratford, but so are the two bondsmen, who, as I shall presently show, were respectable neighbours of the Hathaways of Shottery.* They are mentioned together as

* Richardson was perhaps related to "William Rychardson of Shotterey," one of the bridge-wardens of Stratford in 29 Hen. VIII. The Stratford registers exhibit several notices of the Richardsons and Sandels, e. g. bapt. May 20, 1574, Rose daughter to John Richardson of Shattery; Nov. 30, 1575, Jone

being bail for a party, in the registry of the Court of Record, 26 April, 29 Eliz. 1587, "Elizabethe Smythe vid. attachiat. fuit per servien. ad clavem ibidem ad respondend. Roberto Parrett in placito debiti, Johannes Richardson de Shottrey et Fulcus Sandells de Shottrey præd. m. pro præd. Elizabeth. &c. concord." Thus we find that the entire transaction was conducted under the care of Anne Hathaway's neighbours and friends. It has been said that Sandels and Richardson were rude, unlettered husbandmen, unfitted to attend a poet's bridal. They could not, it is true, write their own names, but neither could Shakespeare's father, nor many of the principal inhabitants of Stratford.* Richardson was a substantial farmer, as appears from the following inventory of his goods made in 1594, his friend Sandels being one of the persons engaged in its compilation.† The original is preserved at Stratford.

The tru inventory of the goodes and chattells of John Richardsons, late of Shottre in the perish of Stratford upon Avon, in the countye of Warwycke, decessed, taken the iiij.th day of November, 1594, and in the xxxvj.th yeare of

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daughter to John Richardson; July 17, 1578, John sonne to John Richardson of Shottrey; Aprill 24, 1581, William sonne to John Richardson; March 23, 1583, Mary daughter to ffoulke Sandulls; Dec. 22, 1583, Mary daughter to John Richardson; March 17, 1584-5, John sonne to ffowlke Sanduls; Nov. 27, 1586, ffoulke sonne to John Richardsonne; May 1, 1587, Thomas sonne to ffowlke Sanduls; Aug. 17, 1589, Edward sonne to ffowlke Sanduls; Sept. 7, 1589, John sonne to John Richardsonne; Sept. 24, 1592, Margareta filia Johanni Richardsonnes; Oct. 8, 1592, Ralph filius ffowlke Sanduls, &c. A John Richardson, of Norton Lindsey, is mentioned in the King's Bench Rolls for Hilary Term, 29 Eliz.

* John Shakespeare could not write, although he was employed to audit the accounts of the corporation, and John Taylor, one of the chamberlains, signs with a mark.

† He seems to have been often engaged in such matters. There is preserved at Stratford, "The true inventory of Roger Burmans goodes, late of Shottre, in the perish of Stratford upon Avon, in the county of Warwycke, husbandman, taken the fyrst day of March in the xxxiij.th yeare of the raygne of our soverayngne lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, ffraunce, and Ierland, Defender of the ffayth, etc. by the discretyon of Steven Burman, ffowcke Sandalls, and John Barber, with others."

the rayngne of our Soverayne Lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, Fraunce and Ierland, defender of the ffayth, and by the dyscretyon of Mr. John Gibbs, Mr. John Burman, ffowcke Sandells, John . . . . . and John Barber.

Inprimis, his apperrell praysed at - - - - - x.*s.*

Item, in the hall a table bord, iij. benches, and two cheyres, praysed at vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

In the chamber.

Inprimis, one ffether bed, ij. flocke bedds, ij. boulsters, iij. pillows, ij. hillyngs, fowr blankets, and fowr twellis, at - - - - - l.*s.*

Item, thre pere of bedsteds, iij. coffers, and ij. cobbords, praysed at - x.*s.*

Item, paynted clothes in the chamber - - - - ij.*s.*

Item, iiij. pere of fflaxen shetes, iiij. pere of hemp shetes, thre bord clothes, ij. towells, one table napkens and one pillowebure, at - - xxs.*s.*

In the saller.

Item, one cheese bord, xl. smale cheses, and a fewe locks of woll, at xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*

In the kytchyn.

Inprimis, v. brasse potts, ij. pans, ij. caldrens, one posnet, a skymer, a drypyng pan, one pere of pot hookes, a brach, a pere of wafer yrons, a grydyron, pot hanglysh, a fod stone, and a chafferne, at - - - xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*

Item, xij. platters, a sawcer, one salt, iij. candlestyckes, a yewre, a chaffyng dysh, and ij. pewter potts - - - - - - x.*s.*

Item, one bruyng lead and a malt myll - - - - x.*s.*

Item, iij. Jomes, one kyver, iij. barells, a boultyng which, a mouldyng bord, ij. syves, a strycke, a scuttle, v. disshes, a dosen of trenchers, v. spones, and an old cobbord, at - - - - - - - ix.*s.*

Item, the wheat, barley, pease, wotes, and hey, in the barns, at - xl.*li.*

Item, the wheat sowed in the fyld at - - - - v.*li.*

Item, the tylledge for wheat and barley at - - - iiij.*li.*

Item, fyve kyne, three heyffers, and a bullocke - - - x.*li.*

Item, fowr horses and mares - - - - - xl.*s.*

Item, vj. swyne praysed at - - - - - xxx.*s.*

Item, vj. score sheepe and x. shepe at - - - - xij.*li.*

Item, thre gese and a gander, xj. hennes, a cocke, two capons, and iiij. checkyns, at - - - - - - - vj.*s.*

Item, one long cart, and a wayne, ij. tumbrell beds, an oxe plow and an horse plowe, a pere of harrowes, and one great harrowe, one pere of draghts, one yolke, and a tawe, with wod and shepe racks at - - - - l.*s.*

Summa totalis, lxxxvij.*li.* iij.*s.* viij.*d.*

The epithet *husbandman* did not denote that inferior condition, which those who have reasoned on the bond have generally imputed to it. When Robert Myddylton, "pryste and chaunter in the College of Stratford," made his will in 1538, still preserved at Worcester, he named for his executors "William Wyllshay, pryste and vycare of the College of Warwycke, and Thomas Cole, husbandman in Shoterey." The husbandman of Shottery was, then, not necessarily a "heavy ploughman." His position in society did no discredit to the part taken by him in Shakespeare's nuptials. If one husbandman could with propriety be a priest's executor, surely another might sign a bond, without the circumstance creating mysterious arguments.

Anne Hathaway,* as appears from her monumental inscription in Stratford church, was born in the year 1556, and was therefore eight years older than her husband. With this fact in view, and relying on very uncertain personal allusions in his plays and sonnets, it has been conjectured that Shakespeare's marriage was not productive of domestic happiness. For this opinion not a fragment of direct evidence has been produced, and on equally potent grounds might we prove him to have been jealous, or in fact to have been in his own person the actual representative

* If Richard Hathaway, who was a dramatist contemporary with Shakespeare, and is frequently mentioned in Henslowe's Diary, was the son of the Richard Hathaway of Shottery, mentioned as born in 1561-2, and the conjecture is not improbable, he would have been brother-in-law to the poet, and perhaps they attached themselves to the stage at the same time. They were, however, engaged by different companies. The original signature from which the following fac-simile was taken is in a MS. at Dulwich College.

of all the passions he describes in the persons of his characters. But "his wife and daughters did earnestly desire to be layd in the same grave with him," as the clerk informed Dowdall (p. 88) in the year 1693. "Would you desire better sympathy?" Then is there the pleasing memorial of filial affection in the chancel of Stratford church, a monument raised by her daughter, which tells us how revered was Anne Shakespeare's memory, and plainly teaches us to infer she possessed "as much virtue as could die." Such a being must have lived happily with the "gentle Shakespeare,"—

> Ubera tu, mater, tu lac vitamque dedisti:
> Væ mihi! pro tanto munere saxa dabo.

In pursuing our inquiries into the history of Shakespeare's life, which must necessarily to some extent be founded on conjecture, it is now necessary to inform the reader that the theft of deer and rabbits was an amusement indulged in by the youths of Shakespeare's time, and although legally punishable, was regarded by the public as a venial offence, not detrimental to the characters of the persons who committed the depredation. Dr. Forman, in his Autobiography, MS. Ashmole 208, speaking of two Oxford students in 1573, "the one of them was Sir Thornbury, that after was bishope of Limerike, and he was of Magdalen College, the other was Sir Pinckney his cossine of St. Mary Halle," proceeds to say, "thes too loved him [Forman] nying welle, and many tymes wold make Simon to goo forth tho Loes, the keper of Shottofer, for his houndes to goe on huntinge from morninge to nighte, and they never studied nor gave themselves to their bockes, but to goe to scolles of defence, to the daunceing scolles, *to stealle dear and connyes,* and to hunt the hare, and to woinge of wentches, to goe to Doctor Lawrence of

Cowly, for he had too fair daughters, Besse and Martha." Raynoldes, who wrote against plays in 1599, couples deer-stealing and orchard-robbing together, as offences of the same magnitude. But deer-stealing was not only considered venial but fashionable, as may be gathered from the following passage in the Wizard, a play written about 1640, in the British Museum, MS. Addit. 10306:

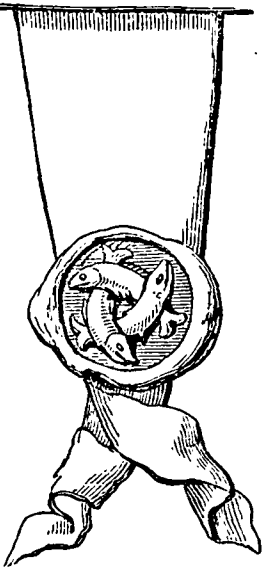
> Gentlemanlike! he nere kept horse
> Nor hounds; you might as soon have got him to
> The gallows, as to th' stealing of a deer:
> Since hee has made a journey to London,
> Shall have him in the twelvepenny seat at
> Playhowses, nere sit in the stage pitt.

The public records contain many notices of deer-stealing. In 1583, Lord Berkeley issued a bill in the Star Chamber against twenty persons who had hunted deer unlawfully in his forests. The answer of William Weare, one of the defendants, is preserved in the Chapter House, Westminster, xciv. 24, and he confesses having killed a doe, but, notwithstanding that admission, asserts that the proceedings against him were malicious and uncalled for. Fosbroke (Hist. Glouc. i. 125) mentions an anecdote tending to show that respectable persons in the county of Gloucestershire, adjoining Warwickshire, were not ashamed of the practice of stealing deer. Several attorneys and others, "all men of mettall, and good woodmen, I mean old notorious deer stealers, well armed, came in the night-time to Michaelwood, with deer-nets and dogs, to steale deer." Falstaff asks, "Am I a woodman?" Can it have been an old cant term for a deer-stealer? If so, Falstaff's speech may allude to what is stated in the commencement of the Merry Wives of Windsor. Shakespeare is said, on good authority, to have been implicated in a frolic of this kind, and, although the

earliest notice of the tale was not penned till nearly eighty years after the death of the poet; yet the person who recorded it resided in a neighbouring county, and being a clergyman, with no motive whatever to mislead, his testimony is of great value. The Rev. William Fulman, who died in 1688, bequeathed his biographical collections to his friend the Rev. Richard Davies, rector of Sapperton, in Gloucestershire, who made several additions to them. Davies died in 1708, and these manuscripts were presented to the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where they are still preserved. Under the article *Shakespeare,* Fulman made very few notes, and those of little importance; but Davies inserted the curious information, so important in the consideration of the deer-stealing story. The following is a complete copy of what the MS. contains respecting Shakespeare, distinguishing the additions made by Davies by italics:

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford upon Avon in Warwickshire, about 1563-4. *Much given to all unluckinesse in stealing venison and rabbits, particularly from Sr . . . . Lucy, who had him oft whipt and sometimes imprisoned, and at last made him fly his native country to his great advancemt. but his reveng was so great, that he is his Justice Clodpate, and calls him a great man, and that in allusion to his name bore three louses rampant for his arms.* From an actor of playes he became a composer. He dyed Apr. 23, 1616, ætat. 53, probably at Stratford, for there he is buryed, and hath a monument (Dugd. p. 520), *on which he lays a heavy curse upon any one who shal remoove his bones. He dyed a papist.*

This testimony has been doubted, because no such character as Clodpate occurs in any of Shakespeare's plays; but it was a generic term of the time for a foolish person, and that Davies so used it, there can, I think, be little doubt. In the MS. account of Warwickshire, 1693, before quoted, the writer calls the judge of the Warwick assizes Mr. Justice Clodpate, intending to characterize him as an



ignorant, stupid man. The "three louses rampant" refer to the arms actually borne by Lucy. The "dozen white luces" in the play is merely one of Slender's mistakes. At all events, here we have the earliest explanation of the remarkable satirical allusions to the Lucy family at the commencement of the Merry Wives of Windsor. "I will make a Star-chamber matter of it," says Justice Shallow; and we have just seen that the offence of deer-stealing was referred to that arbitrary court.* "You have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge." Davies tells us moreover, what we should have believed independently of his authority, that Sir Thomas Lucy was ridiculed under one of his characters. That character is Justice Shallow, and the satire is by no means confined to one play. There can be little doubt but that the exquisite descriptions of a country justice of peace in

* Among the unpublished papers in the Talbot collection is a letter from the Earl of Derby, dated 1589-90, relating to a deer-stealer in Staffordshire, whom he binds over to appear before Lord Shrewsbury, "and at the nexte terme (God willinge) I will call hym into the Starre Chamber to answeere his misdemenors." In the same MSS. is a letter from the Archbishop of York, 1556-7, relating to "divers evill disposed personnes who entred into the same parke by night season with grehoundes and bowes extending to destroy our deare."

the Second Part of Henry IV. are in some degree founded upon Sir Thomas Lucy. When Falstaff says, "if the young dace be a bait for the old pike, I see no reason, in the law of nature, but I may snap at him," we see a direct personal allusion, a luce being merely a full-grown pike. Harrison, in his Description of England, p. 224, says, "the pike, as he ageth, receiveth diverse names, as from a frie to a gilthed, from a gilthed to a pod, from a pod to a jacke, from a jacke to a pickerell, from a pickerell to a pike, and last of all to a luce." Shallow's declaration, "I am, sir, under the king, in some authority," the constant ebullitions of importance where so much is inadequate in his nature to support it, and touches that give his whole character the air of a semi-ludicrous creation, would more severely wound an individual, if Sir Thomas was recognised by such foibles, than

the keenest verses attached to the gates of Charlecote Park. I trust that in adopting this view of the case, believing the account given by Davies to shadow the truth, I am not falling into the error of particularising a generic character. I am too well aware that Shakespeare's inventions were "not of an age, but for all time;" but in this instance we have palpable evidence of an allusion to an individual, a neighbour of Shakespeare, introduced in a manner to leave no room for hesitating to believe that a retaliating satire was intended. Again, observe how severe is Falstaff on Shallow's administration of justice, on the "semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his." Davy's interceding for his friend Visor is one of the keenest satires of the kind to be found in Shakespeare.

It is well known that Shakespeare, throughout his life, retained a strong affection for his native town, but I do not think it has ever been observed how often he adopted the names of his characters from his neighbours in Warwickshire. In the play we have just been noticing, there are several remarkable instances of this. Bardolf and Fluellen were names well known at Stratford. At a meeting of the town council, 9 March, 1604, it was "ordered that Isabell Bardolf, widow, shall have and enjoy one tenement in the almeshouse with widdow Bishopp." In the registry of the Court of Record, August 19th, 1584, William Parsons brought an action of debt against William Fluellen, "Willielmus Parsons quer. versus Willielmum fflewellyn def. de placito debiti;" and Anne Fluellen is mentioned in the Chamberlains' accounts for 1604, "the summe of monye receyved in the consell house, and of Isabell Hudson, Anne Fluellyn, and widow Cowle, elected almesweomen, and from the ringers of the chappels great bell, is, 11*li.* 13*s.* 6*d.*" William Fluellen and George Bardolf are found in the list of recusants, printed at p. 72. The name of Shallow's servant Davy may have been taken from Davy Jones, an inhabitant of Stratford, who is mentioned in the extracts I have given from the Chamberlains' accounts as exhibiting a "pastyme" at Whitsuntide. Two persons of the names of Perkes, inhabitants of Snitterfield, have already been mentioned (p. 8), and Peto* was a Warwickshire magistrate contemporary with Sir Thomas Lucy. In the rolls of King's Bench, 28 Eliz. John Richardson is mentioned as bringing an action against Thomas Partlett. This entry may be referred to an antiquary of the old

* In the corporation archives at Warwick is preserved "The note of such typlers and alehouse-kepers as the justices of peax have returned to me this Michilmas sessions. Thies underwriten were returnyd by Sir Thomas Lucy and Humfrey Peyto, esquire." Mich. 15 Eliz.

school. What follows is more to the purpose. The names of Sly, Herne, Horne, Brome, Page, and Ford, will be found in the following extracts from the MSS. in the Council Chamber at Stratford. It may be necessary to add that Herne the hunter is called *Horne* in the first sketch of the Merry Wives, and that *Brome* will be found to be Ford's assumed name in the first folio:

1570. Inprimis for a howse and a barne in Henley Stret in the tenure of John Page and John Carpenter als. - - ix.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Item, we praie allowaunce for the muckhill in the Rather Stret in the tenure and occupacion of John Page - - viij.*d.*
1585. Paid to John Page for mendynge the grete bell, when the clypps of iron were loste . - - - - ij.*s.*
Paid to Herne for iij. dayes worke - - ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
1597. R. of Mr. Parsons for the house where John Page dwelled - iiij.*d.*
R. of Thomas Fordes wiffe - - - vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
1606. Reginalde Brome, of Woodlowe in the countye of Warwicke, *deed dated Dec. 20th, 4 Jac. I.*
1613. Paid to Hearne for mending a dorman in the scole before the glasse was set in yt, ij.*d.*, and for lath nailes, ob., in all - ij.*d.* ob.
1626. Thomas Greene, Symon Horne, John Heminges, of Bishopton, concerned in a purchase of tithes.
1630. Item, of Joane Slie for breaking the Sabath by traveling - 3—4.
1633. William Horne, mentioned in a deed, May 17, 9 Car. I.

I do not of course infer that these were in every case the persons from whom Shakespeare derived the names, but still it is curious to see that he condescended to employ in his plays the appellations of persons with whom he was probably familiar in his youth; and I have introduced the subject here, because it appears to me that this circumstance tends to exhibit in itself a probability in favour of early local allusions in his plays. It must be conceded that Sir Thomas Lucy had in some way or other persecuted the poet, for nothing short of a persecution would have provoked an attack from one elsewhere so moderate and gentle in the few notices he has recorded of his contemporaries. The Lucys possessed great power at Stratford, and were besides

not unfrequently engaged in disputes with the corporation of that town. Records of one such dispute respecting common of pasture in Henry VIII.'s reign are still preserved in the Chapter House; and amongst the miscellaneous papers at the Rolls House, i. 491, I met with an early paper bearing the attractive title of "the names of them that made the ryot uppon Master Thomas Lucy esquier." This list contains the names of thirty-five inhabitants of Stratford, mostly tradespeople, but none of the Shakespeares were amongst the number. We may safely accept the deer-stealing story, not in all its minute particulars, but in its outline, to be essentially true, until more decisive evidence can be produced which shall also explain equally well the allusions to which we have above referred. It is now necessary that Rowe's account of the matter in 1709 should be exhibited.

Upon his leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him; and in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway, said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of, forced him both out of his country and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it seemed at first to be a blemish upon his good manners and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest geniuses that ever was known in dramatick poetry. He had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London.

At Stratford there was a late tradition that Shakespeare stole the deer to "furnish forth his marriage table." Had

this circumstance been recorded by Davies or Rowe, it would have thrown a doubt on the whole narrative, for Shakespeare did not leave Stratford till some time after his marriage with Anne Hathaway. Mr. Collier has proved the important condition to the problem of the deer-stealing story, that Sir Thomas Lucy had deer, a fact Malone was at so much pains to decide in the negative. Many years after the appearance of Rowe's Life, part of the verses by Shakespeare on Lucy were published as being taken from the MS. notes of Oldys, although Rowe states distinctly that the ballad was lost. There is neither external nor internal evidence of any value in favour of the authenticity of this fragment, but the fabrication is sufficiently ingenious to deserve an exposure:

A parliamente member, a justice of peace,
At home a poore scare-crow, at London an asse;
If lowsie is Lucy, as some volke miscalle it,
Then Lucy is lowsie, whatever befalle it:
He thinkes himselfe greate,
Yet an asse in his state
We allowe by his eares but with asses to mate.
If Lucy is lowsie, as some volke miscalle it,
Sing lowsie Lucy, whatever befalle it.

It does not require much penetration to perceive how palpable a forgery is this, yet one Jordan of Stratford had the boldness to compose and palm on his friends what he termed "a complete copy of the verses," professing to have discovered them in an old chest in a cottage at Shottery. These have been printed in many works, apparently without a suspicion of their want of genuineness, but however curious as the ingenious production of an uneducated person, there is not the slightest necessity for introducing them here. The MSS. of Oldys, from which the stanza above given is said to have been taken, are not now extant; and, although it is a matter of no great consequence, for the

name of Oldys is not of itself sufficient to stamp authenticity upon it, yet it appears not very improbable that his name may have been used as a cover for a composition of a considerably later period. In another account we read that a person of the name of Jones, residing at a village about eighteen miles from Stratford, and who died in 1703, aged upwards of ninety, "remember'd to have heard from several old people at Stratford the story of Shakespeare's robbing Sir Thomas Lucy's park; and their account of it agreed with Mr. Rowe's, with this addition, that the ballad written against Sir Thomas by Shakespeare was stuck upon his park gate, which exasperated the knight to apply to a lawyer at Warwick to proceed against him; Mr. Jones had put down in writing the first stanza of this ballad, which was all he remember'd of it, and Mr. Thomas Wilkes, my grandfather, transmitted it to my father by memory, who also took it in writing." This is the account furnished by Capell in 1779,* and a few years afterwards Steevens printed the stanza from the MS. collections of Oldys. These latter are also referred to by Capell as containing the stanza, so that it is not very likely there was any collusion or deception as far as that part of the matter is concerned. Capell's authority is certainly insufficient to prove the authenticity of the above fragment, yet it will be conceded that it is an evidence in favour of the deer-stealing tradition being generally known and believed in the neighbourhood of Stratford about the year 1700. Capell considers that the epithet *scarecrow* applied to Lucy, and agreeing with the personal appearance of Justice Shallow, is an argument in favour of the genuineness of the poem.

* Notes and Various Readings to Shakespeare, vol. ii. p. 75. Capell's account is attributed by Mr. Collier to Oldys, and this has led him to rely on one authority only. The evidences of Capell and Oldys, considered together, are no mean supports to the general truth of the tradition.

Some other lines of this celebrated song were stated by Chetwood in a MS. History of the Stage written about 1730, to have been procured by Joshua Barnes at Stratford about the year 1690. Chetwood's name is unfortunately associated with several literary impositions, so that his authority cannot well be allowed to possess much weight, excepting on the supposition that at the period he wrote, this was not exactly the subject on which a fabricator would be likely to exercise his skill. According to this writer, "the learned Mr. Joshua Barnes, late Greek Professor of the University of Cambridge, baiting about forty years ago at an inn in Stratford, and hearing an old woman singing part of the above-said song, such was his respect for Mr. Shakspeare's genius, that he gave her a new gown for the two following stanzas in it; and, could she have said it all, he would, as he often said in company, when any discourse has casually arose about him, have given her ten guineas." Then follow the verses alluded to,—

Sir Thomas was too covetous
To covet so much deer,
When horns enough upon his head
Most plainly did appear.

Had not his worship one deer left?
What then? He had a wife
Took pains enough to find him horns
Should last him during life.

Whiter,* a very able critic, contended for the authenticity of these latter verses on internal evidence, as being written in the style of Shakespeare's time, and containing a quibble which the poet has employed more than once in his plays. This opinion has been followed by others, yet I cannot but

* Specimen of a Commentary on Shakspeare, 1794, p. 95. It should be observed that an inscription in the church at Charlecote bears special testimony to the virtue of Lady Lucy.

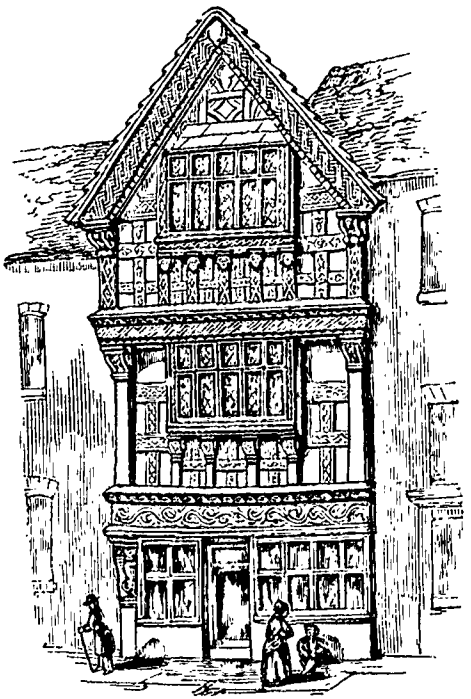
think if any part of the song written by Shakespeare had descended to our days, no matter how distorted in passing through the channels of tradition, we should discover in it some marks of his genius. Nothing of the kind can be said in favour of either of the specimens above quoted, which cannot besides be supposed to belong to the same ballad. Under any circumstances, therefore, one of the two must be spurious. Still is it most unfair to join the first verse of the ballad, commencing "a parliament member," with the after part fabricated by Jordan, and thus dismiss the whole. This Mr. Hunter has done. There are signs of a later composition in the part written by Jordan, not to be discovered in the first stanza; and although I am convinced none of it is authentic, still the stanza here given must be at all events an earlier composition.

Mr Knight has attacked the deer-stealing anecdote with peculiar ingenuity, yet his refutation is not supported by evidence of weight. Traditions generally do not improve in certainty with age, and so many little improbable and inconsistent attendant circumstances are added in course of time, that to disprove these latter is often no difficult task. This has been the case in the present instance, and Mr. Knight is triumphant when he reaches the circumstantial statement of Ireland, who makes Fulbroke Park the scene of the exploit, and goes so far as to give us a representation of the keeper's lodge in which Shakespeare was confined after his detection. According to Mr. Knight, Fulbroke Park did not come into the possession of the Lucy family till the seventeenth century. This is, of course, a final refutation of Ireland's account, but it must be recollected no such testimony is produced, in fact, no proof whatever, against the fact that Sir Thomas Lucy persecuted the poet for stealing his deer. This is in substance all that is here contended for, and Mr. Knight writes so evidently with

a purpose, for in no single instance, on no strength of evidence, will he allow a blemish in Shakespeare's moral character, even in venial lapses which really do not lessen our respect for his memory, that it may perhaps be necessary to impress upon the reader how biography loses nearly all its value if we are not permitted to exhibit social character as it actually existed, and thus make it of a philosophical importance, by teaching us in what substances "finely touched" spirits are suffered to dwell. Mr. Knight has had several followers in his desire to represent Shakespeare's moral as great as his mental superiority, and one of them has amusingly confessed the motive of it all. "The dignity of a great man's biography," observes Mr. Fairholt, "should not be broken up by such tales." This is quite sufficient. No tradition will remain safe after the promulgation of such an axiom.

Rowe says that Shakespeare removed to London, leaving his business and family in Warwickshire, and it is to be observed that no contemporary evidence has been produced to show that his family ever resided with him in the metropolis. His daughter Susanna was born at Stratford in May, 1583, and Hamnet and Judith, twin-children, were born in the same town early in 1585, the son dying at Stratford in August, 1596. It seems evident that the poet was always intimately associated with his native town, and never made a removal from it of a permanent character. The probability may be in favour of his never having relinquished what establishment he may have possessed at Stratford, and, if so, his association with the drama may have commenced almost as early as the date of his marriage with Anne Hathaway. This is a point which will probably never be correctly ascertained, but it is by no means necessary to suppose that the depredation committed on Sir Thomas Lucy, and its consequences, were the only reasons

for his entering on a new profession. I have proved, on undeniable evidence, that in March, 29 Eliz., 1587, Shakespeare's father was in prison, for on the 29th day of that month he produced a writ of habeas corpus in the Stratford Court of Record. See pp. 43, 44. Previously to this period, we discover him in transactions which leave no



House in High Street, Stratford, erected 1596.

room for doubting that he was in difficulties, or at least in circumstances that placed him in a delicate legal position. Join to this the certainty that these matters would affect his son, with the traditions above related, and reason will be found quite sufficient for Shakespeare's important step of joining the metropolitan players. There is something apologetic in the following:

O, for my sake do you with fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide,
Than publick means, which publick manners breeds.*

The best accounts we are possessed of tell us that Shakespeare commenced in a "very mean rank" in the company; according to Dowdall's letter, 1693, he was "received into the playhouse as a serviture," really meaning, I suppose, that Shakespeare was either an "apprentice" to an actor of some standing, or entered the company as an actor of inferior rank. He became no doubt an actor of considerable reputation, although his merits as a writer threw his histrionic abilities into the shade.† According to Rowe, "the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own Hamlet," but this statement rests on slender authority, and is undoubtedly an exaggeration, for an early elegy upon Shakespeare alludes to him as "that famous writer and actor." The writer of a life of Shakespeare, published in a work entitled 'The Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland,' 12mo. Lond. 1753, gives us another account of the introduction of the great dramatist to the London playhouses.

I cannot forbear relating a story which Sir William Davenant told Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe; Rowe told it Mr. Pope, and Mr. Pope told it to Dr. Newton, the late editor of Milton, and from a gentleman who heard it from him, 'tis here related. Concerning Shakespear's first appearance in the playhouse. When he came to London, he was without money and friends,

* Sonnet cxi. Although the sonnets cannot safely be regarded as biographical, they may in some instances be taken as indications of the writer's sentiments.

† See an epigram addressed to Mr. John Honyman, in Cokain's Small Poems, 1658, p. 140:

On, hopefull youth, and let thy happy strain
Redeem the glory of the stage again;
Lessen the loss of Shakespeare's death by thy
Successful pen, and fortunate phantasie.
He did not onely write, but act; and so
Thou dost not onely act, but writest too.

and being a stranger, he knew not to whom to apply, nor by what means to support himself. At that time, coaches not being in use, and as gentlemen were accustomed to ride to the playhouse, Shakespear, driven to the last necessity, went to the playhouse door, and pick'd up a little money by taking care of the gentlemen's horses who came to the play; he became eminent even in that profession, and was taken notice of for his diligence and skill in it; he had soon more business than he himself could manage, and at last hired boys under him, who were known by the name of Shakespear's boys. Some of the players, accidentally conversing with him, found him so acute, and master of so fine a conversation, that, struck therewith, they [introduced] and recommended him to the house, in which he was first admitted in a very low station, but he did not long remain so, for he soon distinguished himself, if not as an extraordinary actor, at least as a fine writer. (Vol. i. pp. 130-1.)

This anecdote is repeated by Dr. Johnson, with several variations. According to this authority, Shakespeare became "so conspicuous for his care and readiness" in holding the horses, "that in a short time every man as he alighted called for Will. Shakspeare, and scarcely any other waiter was trusted with a horse while Will. Shakspeare could be had. This was the first dawn of better fortune. Shakspeare, finding more horses put into his hand than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inspection, who, when Will. Shakspeare was summoned, were immediately to present themselves, *I am Shakspeare's boy, sir.* In time, Shakspeare found higher employment, but as long as the practice of riding to the playhouse continued, the waiters that held the horses retained the appellation of *Shakspeare's boys.*" It will be observed that the story thus amplified is much more incredible than the original version in the 'Lives of the Poets,' which may have been obtained from Oldys or Coxeter, part of their MSS. having been used in the compilation of that work. Mr. Collier indignantly rejects the anecdote, alluding solely to the latter account of it. It cannot indeed be said to have been derived from a pure source, and Rowe has no allusion to it; but it is worthy of remark, that the practice of riding to the theatres had long been discontinued, and it is unlikely that a fabri-

cator of the eighteenth century would have been acquainted with so minute a piece of antiquarian information.

It is not till the year 1589 that we procure any certain information respecting Shakespeare in London. About that period, serious complaints had been made, and the players had suffered many obstructions, on account of satirical and political subjects having been introduced into their performances. On some such occasion, the sharers of the Blackfriar's Theatre addressed the following certificate to the Privy Council, and it is one of the most important documents connected with Shakespeare yet discovered. It was found by Mr. Collier in the archives of the Earl of Ellesmere, and published by him in his 'New Facts regarding the Life of Shakespeare,' 8vo. 1835, p. 11.

These are to certifie your right Honorable Lordships that her Majesties poore playeres, James Burbadge, Richard Burbadge, John Laneham, Thomas Greene, Robert Wilson, John Taylor, Anth. Wadeson, Thomas Pope, George Peele, Augustine Phillipps, Nicholas Towley, William Shakespeare, William Kemp, William Johnson, Baptiste Goodale, and Robert Armyn, being all of them sharers in the Blacke Fryers playehouse, have never given cause of displeasure in that they have brought into theire playes maters of state and religion unfitt to bee handled by them or to bee presented before lewde spectators: neither hath anie complaynte in that kinde ever bene preferrde against them or anie of them. Wherefore they trust moste humblie in your Lordships consideration of their former good behaviour, being at all tymes readie and willing to yeelde obedience to any command whatsoever your Lordships in your wisdome may thinke in such cas e meete, &c.

Novr. 1589.

If the reader will now turn to Dowdall's account that Shakespeare first entered the theatre as a servitor, he will, I think, find here something like a confirmation of that statement. Henslowe has a memorandum in his MS. register, in which he states that he "hiered as a covenaunt servant Willyam Kendall for ij. years, after the statute of Winchester, with ij. single penc, and [he] to geve hym for his sayd servis everi week of his playing in London x.*s.* and in

the cuntrie v.s. for the which he covenaunteth for the space of those ij. yeares to be redye at all tymes to play in the howse of the said Philip, and in no other, during the sayd terme." It is most consonant with the customs of the time to suppose that Shakespeare was such a servitor; and, if that were the case, we should naturally expect to find him raised afterwards to the rank of a sharer in the theatre, not a proprietor, but one who shared in the division of the daily profits of the representations. Mr. Collier's important discovery proves that Shakespeare had attained that rank in the Blackfriar's Theatre in November, 1589.

Innumerable theories have been propounded as to the precise period when Shakespeare commenced writing for the stage; but no certain information having been procured, and the question being capable of several probable solutions, it shall here be passed over, and left to the reader's own judgment, to be formed from what has just been, and will hereafter be stated. But one of the most valuable facts connected with the history of Shakespeare's plays, although recorded on the testimony of Dryden, has not received that prominent notice which it deserves. Dryden, in his corrected prologue to the first play produced by Charles Davenant, 1677, taking the occasion of asserting that no grand effort in this kind was ever the earliest attempt of a dramatist, refers to the productions of Jonson, Fletcher, and Shakespeare, in these terms:—

> Your Ben and Fletcher, in their first young flight,
> Did no *Volpone*, nor no *Arbaces* write,
> But hopped about and short excursions made
> From bough to bough, as if they were afraid,
> And each was guilty of some *Slighted Maid*.
> Shakespeare's own muse her *Pericles* first bore;
> The *Prince of Tyre* was elder than the *Moor*.

and he proceeds to say, "'tis miracle to see a first good play," for "no man can be Falstaff fat at first." The

meaning of this is perfectly clear. Pericles, the first, and one of the least finished of Shakespeare's plays, preceded by many years Othello, one of his masterpieces. We can scarcely expect to find better authority than this. It is a subject on which Dryden was likely to have been well informed, and he certainly could have had neither motive nor intention to deceive.

The earliest allusion to Shakespeare in the printed literature of this country is said to be found in Spenser's 'Teares of the Muses,' which appeared in the year 1591; and the description is so beautifully expressed, corresponding also so exactly with our present opinion of the great dramatist, that no great taste is necessary to create a desire that Spenser really designed Shakespeare. But the object of these pages is the discovery of truth rather than the development of pretty theories; and although I am prepared to admit the belief that Shakespeare is intended is not to be relinquished on light authority, still will such an opinion have very serious evidence against its reception as a truth. The 'Teares of the Muses' is the second poem in a small collection, entitled 'Complaints, containing sundrie small Poemes of the Worlds Vanitie,' in the preface to which the publisher says, "Since my late setting foorth of the *Faerie Queene*, finding that it hath found a favourable passage amongst you, I have sithence endevoured, by all good meanes, for the better encrease and accomplishment of your delights, to get into my handes such smale poemes of the same authors as I heard were disperst abroad in sundrie hands, and not easie to bee come by by himselfe, *some of them having bene diverslie imbeziled and purloyned from him since his departure over sea; of the which* I have by good meanes gathered togeather these fewe parcels present, which I have caused to bee imprinted altogeather." It is evident from this that the poem was not a new one at the time of its

publication; and although the passage in question might with some license be asserted to apply to Shakespeare in 1591, yet few would be bold enough to say that it could have been intended for him if composed any great while before that date.* Even in the former case, it is rather prophetic than true of things as they existed, and it is difficult to believe so just an appreciation could have been attained so early in his career. Its exact application is rather a proof against such an opinion, and it must be remembered Spenser has elsewhere recorded extravagant estimates of poets now forgotten. The subject of Spenser's poem, a strong satire "keen and critical," is the decay of literature, the Muses being introduced lamenting on its fallen state,—

> The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
> Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary;

and Thalia is most dolorous on the decline of the drama. The whole of her address must be given, for an extract will scarcely suffice for the illustration of our argument:

> Where be the sweete delights of learnings treasure,
> That wont with comick sock to beautefie
> The painted theaters, and fill with pleasure
> The listners eyes and eares with melodie;
> In which I late was wont to raine as Queene,
> And maske in mirth with Graces well beseene?
>
> O all is gone, and all that goodly glee,
> Which wont to be the glorie of gay wits,
> Is layd abed, and no where now to see;
> And in her roome unseemly Sorrow sits,
> With hollow browes and greisly countenaunce,
> Marring my joyous gentle dalliaunce.

---

* The work was actually published in 1590, for it was entered on the Stationers' Company registers towards the close of that year.

And him beside sits ugly Barbarisme,
And brutish Ignorance, yerept of late
Out of dredd darknes of the deep abysme,
Where being bredd, he light and heaven does hate:
They in the mindes of men now tyrannize,
And the faire scene with rudenes foule disguize.

All places they with follie have possest,
And with vaine toyes the vulgare entertaine;
But me have banished, with all the rest
That whilome wont to wait upon my traine,
Fine Counterfesaunce and unhurtfull Sport,
Delight and Laughter deckt in seemly sort.

All these, and all that els the comick stage
With seasoned wit and goodly pleasance graced,
By which mans life in his likest image
Was limned forth, are wholly now defaced;
And those sweete wits, which wont the like to frame,
Are now despizd, and made a laughing game.

And he the man, whom Nature selfe had made
To mock herselfe, and Truth to imitate,
With kindly counter under mimick shade,
Our pleasant Willy, ah! is dead of late:
With whom all joy and jolly meriment
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

In stead thereof scoffing Scurrilitie,
And scornfull Follie with Contempt is crept,
Rolling in rymes of shameles ribaudrie,
Without regard or due decorum kept;
Each idle wit at will presumes to make,
And doth the Learneds taske upon him take.

But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen
Large streames of honnie and sweete Nectar flowe,
Scorning the boldnes of such base-borne men,
Which dare their follies forth so rashlie throwe,
Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.

So am I made the servant of the manie,
And laughing stocke of all that list to scorne,
Not honored nor cared for of anie,
But loath'd of losels as a thing forlorne;
Therefore I mourne and sorrow with the rest,
Untill my cause of sorrow be redrest.

Mr. Todd, whose opinion and argument I am following, believes this poem to have been written in 1580, and he conjectures Sir Philip Sidney to be the person here alluded to. The notice of Sidney in the 'Ruines of Time,' in which he is also termed *gentle spirit*, strongly supports this opinion; and Sidney is known to have been the author of masques. He is several times termed *Willy* in an elegy quoted by Malone, so that the appellation need be no proof against Mr. Todd's theory:—

> We dream'd our *Willy* aye should live,
> So sweet a sound his pipe did give.

It must, on the other hand, be admitted, that Rowe tells us Dryden always considered Spenser's Willy was intended for Shakespeare; but, as the passage was omitted in the second edition of his Life, it may be supposed he discovered his former statement was not correct. If, however, Spenser alludes to Shakespeare in his 'Colin Clout's come Home again,' written after April, 1594, the description he gives of his muse in that work certainly does not correspond with that in the 'Teares of the Muses.' Here, again, is some uncertainty, for the lines seem to apply with equal propriety to Warner,—

> And there, though last, not least, is Action,
> A gentler shepheard may nowhere be found;
> Whose muse, full of high thoughts invention,
> Doth, like himselfe, heroically sound.

The first incontestable notice of Shakespeare by a contemporary writer occurs in a work published at the close of the year 1592, entered on the registers of the Stationers Company on September 20th, "uppon the perill of Henry Chettle, Greens Groatsworth of Wyt, bought with a million of Repentance." Mr. Collier thinks Chettle may himself

have written this tract, availing himself of Greene's popularity for the sake of gain. Chettle appears as Greene's literary executor. In the 'Groatsworth of Wit' is contained a very curious address "To those gentlemen, his quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making playes, R. G. wisheth a better exercise and wisedome to prevent his extremities," in which,* addressing three dramatists, he urges them to break off their connexion with players in the following terms,—

If wofull experience may moove you (Gentlemen) to beware, or unheard of wretchednes intreat you to take heed, I doubt not but you will look backe with sorrow on your time past, and endevour with repentance to spend that which is to come. Wonder not, (for with thee will I firste beginne) thou famous gracer of tragedians, that Green, who hath said with thee like the foole in his heart, *There is no God*, should now give glorie unto His greatnesse: for penetrating is His power, His hand lyes heavy upon me, He hath spoken unto me with a voyce of thunder, and I have left, He is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift, be so blinded, that thou shouldest give no glory to the Giver? Is it pestilent Machivilian policie that thou hast studied? O punish follie! What are his rules but meere confused mockeries, able to extirpate in small time the generation of mankinde. For if *sic volo, sic jubeo*, holde in those that are able to commaund, and if it be lawfull *fas et nefas*, to doo any thing that is beneficiall, onely tyrants should possesse the earth, and they striving to exceed in tiranny, should ech to other be a slaughter-man; till the mightyest outliving all, one stroke were left for death, that in one age mans life should end. The brother of this dyabolicall atheisme is dead, and in his life had never the felicitie he aymed at, but as he beganne in craft, lived in feare, and ended in dispaire. *Quam inscrutabilia sunt Dei judicia!* This murderer of many brethren had his conscience seared like Cayne: this betrayer of him that gave his life for him, inherited the portion of Judas: this apostata perished as ill as Julian: and wilt thou, my friend, be his disciple? Looke unto mee, by him perswaded to that libertie, and thou shalt finde it an infernall bondage. I know the least of my demerits merit this miserable death, but wilfull striving against knowne truth exceedeth all the terrors of my soule. Deferre not (with mee) till this last point of extremitie; for little knowest thou how in the end thou shalt be visited.

* I quote from an undated edition, not being acquainted with one so early as 1592. It appears, however, from 'Kind-Harts Dreame,' that the address here given was substantially, if not literally, the same as in the first edition. It would be very desirable to ascertain whether any alterations were made in it after its first publication.

With thee I joyne young Juvenall, that byting satyrist that lastly with mee together writ a comedie. Sweet boy, might I advise thee, be advised, and get not many enemies by bitter words: inveigh against vaine men, for thou canst doo it, no man better, no man so well: thou hast a libertie to reproove all, and name none: for one being spoken to, all are offended; none beeing blamed, no man is injuried.

Stop shallow water still running, it will rage; tread on a worme and it will turne: then blame not schollers who are vexed with sharpe and bitter lines, if they reproove thy too much liberty of reproofe.

And thou, no less deserving then the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driven, as myselfe, to extreame shifts, a little have I to say to thee; and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would sweare by sweet S. George, thou art unworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. Base minded men, all three of you, if by my misery yee bee not warned: for unto none of you (like me) sought those burs to cleave: those puppits (I mean) that speake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whome they all have bin beholding; is it not like that you, to whom they all have bin beholding, shall (were yee in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygres heart, wrapt in a players hyde,* supposes hee is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and beeing an absolute *Johannes fac totum,* is, in his owne conceyt, the onely Shake-scene in a countrey. Oh that I might intreat your rare wittes to bee imployed in more profitable courses, and let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaynte them with your admyred inventions. I knowe the best husband of you all will never proove an usurer, and the kindest of them all will never proove a kinde nurse; yet whilst you may, seeke you better maisters; for it is pitty men of such rare wits should bee subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes.

In this I might insert two more, that both have writte against these buckram gentlemen; but let their owne work serve to witnesse against theyr owne wickednesse, if they persever to maintaine any more such peasants. For other new commers, I leave them to the mercie of these painted monsters, who (I doubt not) will drive the best minded to despise them; for the rest, it skils not though they make a jeast at them.

But now returne I again to you three, knowing my miserie is to you no newes; and let me heartilie intreate you to be warned by my harmes. Delight not, as I have done, in irreligious oaths, for from the blasphemers house a curse shall not depart: Despise drunkennes, which wasteth the wit, and making men all equall unto beasts: Flie lust, as the deathsman of the soule, and defile not the temple of the Holy Ghost. Abhorre those epicures, whose loose life hath made religion loathsome to your eares, and when they sooth you with tearms of mastership, remember Robert Greene, whome they have often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort. Remember, gentlemen, your lives are like so many light tapers, that are with care delivered to all of you to maintaine; these with wind-puft wrath may be extinguished, which drunkennesse put

out, which negligence let fall; for mans time of itselfe is not so short, but it is more shortened by sinne. The fire of my light is now at the last snuffe, and the want of wherewith to sustaine it, there is no substance for life to feed on. Trust not then (I beseech yee) left to such weake stayes: for they are as changeable in minde, as in many attires. Well, my hand is tyred, and I am forst to leave where I would beginne; for a whole booke cannot contain their wrongs, which I am forst to knit up in some few lines of words. *Desirous that you should live, though himselfe be dying.*

This important allusion to our great dramatist cannot be too minutely investigated. It proves how active he had been as early as 1592, and it also implies that he had attained a certain degree of reputation. One who had created no sensation would scarcely have received so bitter an attack from a rival dramatist; and the parody on a passage in the Third Part of Henry VI. exhibits Shakespeare as the author or adapter of that play previously to September 1592.* We are fortunately furnished with a sequel to this history. It appears that Marlow and Shakespeare were offended with the severe notices of them in this tract, and Chettle, who published 'Kind-Harts Dreame' a few months afterwards, in the course of a very curious preface pays a warm and interesting tribute to the poet, for he himself had "seen his demeanor no less civil than he excellent in the quality he professes; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, which approves his art." Where, after this, is to be found the truth of the assertion that we know nothing of Shakespeare? We have him here before us as one of gentle manners, an excellent actor, an honest man, and an able dramatist. Chettle's testimony in this respect is in the highest degree pleasing, and his apology deserves to be carefully perused,—

* Having entered into this subject very minutely in my Introduction to the 'First Sketches of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI.' 8vo. 1843, I am unwilling to repeat the argument in this place.

About three moneths since died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in sundry bookesellers hands; among other his *Groatsworth of Wit*, in which a letter written to divers play-makers is offensively by one or two of them taken, and because on the dead they cannot be avenged, they wilfully forge in their conceites a living author: and after tossing it two and fro, no remedy but it must light on me. How I have, all the time of my conversing in printing, hindred the bitter inveying against schollers, it hath been very well knowne, and how in that I dealt I can sufficiently proove. With neither of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them I care not if I never be: The other, whome at that time I did not so much spare as since I wish I had, for that, as I have moderated the heate of living writers, and might have usde my owne discretion, especially in such a case, the author beeing dead, that I did not I am as sory as if the originall fault had beene my fault, because myselfe have seene his demeanor no lesse civill than he excelent in the qualitie he professes: Besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writting, which aprooves his art. For the first, whose learning I reverence, and, at the perusing of Greenes booke, stroke out what then in conscience I thought he in some displeasure writ: or, had it beene true, yet to publish it was intollerable: him I would wish to use me no worse than I deserve. I had onely in the copy this share; it was ill written, as sometime Greenes hand was none of the best, licensd it must be ere it could bee printed, which could never be if it might not be read. To be briefe, I writ it over, and, as neare as I could, followed the copy, onely in that letter I put something out, but in the whole booke not a worde in, for I protest it was all Greenes, not mine nor Maister Nashes, as some unjustly have affirmed.*

There was a stage tradition, current in the theatres after the Restoration, that Taylor and Lowen, two of the original actors in Shakespeare's plays, had been specially instructed by the great dramatist himself. Although this tradition was not published till more than eighty years after the death of Shakespeare, it is given on very fair authority, that of Downes, who was prompter at one of the theatres about the year 1662, and for some time afterwards. Mr. Collier seems to doubt the correctness of the characters attributed to these players by Downes, but even if there be some error

* This extract is taken from the copy of 'Kind-Hart's Dreame' in the Bodleian Library, which formerly belonged to Burton, and differs in some trifling respects from other copies of the same tract.

in detail, he could hardly have misrepresented the fact in two instances. Downes, in his 'Roscius Anglicanus,' 1708, is speaking of Sir W. Davenant's theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields between 1662 and 1665,—

> The tragedy of Hamlet, Hamlet being perform'd by Mr. Betterton, Sir William, having seen Mr. Taylor of the Black-fryars company act it, who, being instructed by the author, Mr. Shakespear, taught Mr. Betterton in every particle of it; which, by his exact performance of it, gain'd him esteem and reputation superlative to all other plays. Horatio by Mr. Harris, the King by Mr. Lilliston, the Ghost by Mr. Richards (after by Mr. Medburn), Polonius by Mr. Lovel, Rosencrans by Mr. Dixon, Guilderstern by Mr. Price, first grave-maker by Mr. Underhill, the second by Mr. Dacres, the Queen by Mrs. Davenport, Ophelia by Mrs. Sanderson. No succeeding tragedy for several years got more reputation or money to the company than this.
>
> King Henry the 8th. This play, by order of Sir William Davenant, was all new cloath'd in proper habits: the King's was new, all the lords, the cardinals, the bishops, the doctors, proctors, lawyers, tip-staves; new scenes. The part of the King was so right and justly done by Mr. Betterton, he being instructed in it by Sir William, who had it from old Mr. Lowen, that had his instructions from Mr. Shakespear himself, that I dare and will aver none can or will come near him in this age in the performance of that part. Mr. Harris's performance of Cardinal Wolsey was little inferior to that, he doing it with such just state, port and mien, that I dare affirm none hitherto has equall'd him. Every part, by the great care of Sir William, being exactly perform'd, it being all new cloath'd and new scenes. It continu'd acting 15 days together, with general applause.

According to Aubrey, Shakespeare "did act exceedingly well," and the balance of evidence is in favour of his possessing considerable ability as a performer, although Wright, in 1699, had "heard our author was a better poet than actor." Capell relates an anecdote, which, if true, would confirm the supposition that Shakespeare acted in his native town. According to him,* "a traditional story was current some years ago about Stratford, that a very old man of that place, of weak intellects, but yet related to Shakespeare, being ask'd by some of his neighbours what he remember'd about him, answer'd that he saw him once brought on the

* Notes and Various Readings to Shakespeare, 1779, i. 60.

stage upon another man's back; which answer was apply'd by the hearers to his having seen him perform in this scene the part of Adam." As far as this testimony goes, it is just as probable Shakespeare personated Orlando, for such an error might easily be made. The tale is related more circumstantially by Oldys, but with additions that can scarcely be true; for Charles Hart, the eminent actor, was not a descendant from the poet's family.*

One of Shakespeare's younger brothers, who lived to a good old age, even some years, as I compute, after the restoration of King Charles II., would in his younger days come to London to visit his brother Will, as he called him, and be a spectator of him as an actor in some of his own plays. This custom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramatick entertainments grew the greatest support of our principal if not of all our theatres, he continued, it seems, so long after his brother's death as even to the latter end of his own life. The curiosity at this time of the most noted actors to learn something from him of his brother, &c. they justly held him in the highest veneration; and it may be well believed, as there was besides a kinsman and descendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor amongst them. This opportunity made them greedily inquisitive into every little circumstance, more especially in his dramatick character, which his brother could relate of him; but he, it seems, was so stricken in years, and possibly his memory so weakened with infirmities, which might make him the easier pass for a man of weak intellects, that he could give them but little light into their enquiries; and all that could be recollected from him of his brother Will in that station was the faint, general, and almost lost ideas he had of having once seen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein, being to personate a decrepit old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared so weak and drooping, and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported and carried by another person to a table, at which he was seated among some company who were eating, and one of them sung a song.

There is a very curious passage in Davies' 'Humours Heav'n on Earth,' 1609, p. 208, which, from a marginal

* Old men's characters were frequently performed by boys. Ben Jonson has verses on an actor of such parts who died at the age of thirteen.

But howesoer men may a while dissemble
Their spightfull stomacks, they herein resemble
But painted players, trembling on the stage,
With beard and perywigge made fit for age,
Who have not scarcely liv'd out twenty yeare.

The Newe Metamorphosis, 1600, MS.

note, seems to allude to Shakespeare and Burbage, and may have been written several years before the publication of that work. To be coupled with Burbage, and be said not to have been guerdoned by Fortune to his deserts, certainly implies a high compliment to Shakespeare as an actor:

> Some followed her [Fortune] by acting* all mens parts,
> These on a stage she rais'd (in scorne) to fall,
> And made them mirrors by their acting arts,
> Wherin men saw their† faults, though ne'r so small;
> Yet some she guerdond not to their desarts;‡
> But othersome were but ill-action all,
> Who, while they acted ill, ill staid behinde,
> By custome of their maners, in their minde.

Davies could have told much that is interesting relating to Shakespeare, and even the few notices he has recorded of him are valuable. The following, which occurs in his 'Scourge of Folly,' p. 76, alludes apparently to some anecdote now lost, but we may conclude from it that Shakespeare had acted the part of a king in certain plays, and the concluding lines seem intended as a compliment to his character,—

> *To our English Terence, Mr. Will. Shake-speare.*
>
> Some say, good Will, which I in sport do sing,
> Had'st thou not plaid some kingly parts in sport,
> Thou hadst bin a companion for a king,
> And beene a king among the meaner sort.
> Some others raile, but raile as they thinke fit,
> Thou hast no rayling, but a raigning wit:
> And honesty thou sow'st, which they do reape,
> So to increase their stocke, which they do keepe.

The allusion is obscure, but it may be conjectured to mean that had not Shakespeare performed in some charac-

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* Stage plaiers.
† Shewing the vices of the time.
‡ W. S., R. B.

ters displeasing to James I. he would have been specially patronised by that monarch; and it tells us that the poet had his detractors, "some others raile." We know that early in the reign of James he was a member of the company enrolled under the title of the King's Servants, and in an advertisement prefixed to Lintot's edition of Shakespeare's poems, 1710, we are informed that "King James the First was pleas'd with his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakespeare, which letter, tho now lost, remain'd long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant, as a credible person now living can testify." Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Fuller's Worthies,* says the Duke of Buckingham told Lintot he had seen it in the possession of Sir William D'Avenant. The year 1710 was anterior to the date of intentional Shakespearian fabrications, and I am somewhat at a loss to appreciate the grounds on which this statement has been disbelieved, receiving, as it does, the weight of the circumstantial evidence of Oldys. We must ever regret the loss of this "amicable letter," a greater honour to James than any action of his that has yet been revealed. If, then, we are to believe the words of Davies literally, the offence was probably committed some time after his accession to the throne, and it is known that severe animadversions on his government were covertly alluded to in some of the dramas of the time.† Admit

* This is surely not a conjectural addition by Oldys, as suspected by Mr. Collier, p. 213. Oldys was contemporary with the publication of the anecdote, and would not state a fact in direct terms such as these, had he not believed it. The note of Oldys has not hitherto been cited properly.

† "What inconsiderate distraccion hathe attached the players of our daies, for comedians I cannot call them tyll they leave makeinge hotchepotches of their playes, and begynne to observe decorum dewring the representacion of godds, goddesses, and mightie potentates, promiscuously and confusedly in there interludes, betakeinge themselves to the sock solie, leaveinge the stately buskyn, because they will gett but little, as I suppose, by makeinge men to weepe. *What madnesse is it, I saye, that possesseth them under faigned persons to be censureing of their soveraigne:* surely thoughe there poets for these many yeares

this, and Shakespeare is proved an actor till within a few years of his death; yet I must allow the assumption is founded but on imperfect evidence. A tradition of a much later date than the one just cited tells us that Queen Elizabeth was in the theatre one evening *when Shakespeare was personating the part of a king*, and, in crossing the stage, moved politely to the poet without the honour being duly recognised. Her majesty, it is said, with a view to ascertain whether the omission was intentional, or whether he had resolved not to lose for an instant the personification of the character he supported, again passed the stage near him, and dropped her glove, which was immediately taken up by Shakespeare, who added these lines to a speech just then concluded, "and so aptly were they delivered, that they seemed to belong to it,"—

> And though now bent on this high embassy,
> Yet stoop we to take up our cousin's glove.

He then retired from the stage, and presented the glove to the queen, who was said to have been greatly pleased with his conduct, and to have complimented him upon it. I cannot say who invented this story, but there is no good authority for it, however possible it may be that it is founded on an earlier and less circumstantial tradition.

Shakespeare was certainly fortunate enough to attract the notice and commendation of royalty early in his career. Ben Jonson bears testimony to the pleasure Elizabeth and her successor derived from his surpassing talent,—

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have, for the most part, lefte folcs and devills owt of their playes, yet nowe on the suddayne they make them all playe the foolcs most notoriouslye and impudently in medlinge with him (in waye of taxacion) by whome they live and have in manner there very beinge."—*MS. Sloane* 3543, f. 20. This curious extract is taken from a treatise on hunting, dedicated to the Earl of Northampton.

> Sweet swan of Avon, what a sight it were
> To see thee in our waters yet appear,
> And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
> That so did take Eliza and our James!

and the Merry Wives of Windsor, written as early as 1593, is said on very fair authority to have been written especially for the queen's gratification, and she was so impatient to see it acted, that it was completed in a fortnight. Dennis, in an epistle prefixed to the 'Comical Gallant,' 1702, says of the Merry Wives of Windsor, "I knew very well that it had pleas'd one of the greatest queens that ever was in the world; this comedy was written at her command, and by her direction, and she was so eager to see it acted, that she commanded it to be finished in fourteen days, and was afterwards, as tradition tells us, very well pleas'd with the representation." Rowe, in 1709, says that Elizabeth "was so well pleased with that admirable character of Falstaff in the two parts of Henry IV., that she commanded him to continue it for one play more, and to show him in love: this is said to be the occasion of his writing the Merry Wives of Windsor;" and Gildon, in 1710, partially confirms both these accounts. The tradition in one respect is confirmed by the title-page of the edition of 1602, which states that the play had been performed "before her Majestie and elsewhere." Compliment and patronage are often twins. One of the most elegant pieces of flattery ever addressed to a sovereign is found in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' where the queen is described as the imperial votaress passing on,

> "In maiden meditation, fancy-free,"

a character of allusion we know was received with untiring delight by Elizabeth. As late as December, 1602, when she dined at Sir Robert Cecil's, in the Strand, there were

"sundry devises at hir entrance: three women, a maid, a widow, and a wife, eache contending for their owne states, but the virgin preferred." We cannot doubt that the Midsummer Night's Dream gratified the monarch, and that the poet was in her favour is proved by the direct authority of Chettle, in his 'Englandes Mourning Garment,' 1603, who complains of his neglecting to write an elegy upon the queen,—

> Nor doth the silver-tonged Melicert
> Drop from his honied muse one sable teare,
> To mourne hes death that graced his desert,
> And to his laics opend her royall eare.
> Shepheard, remember our Elizabeth,
> And sing her Rape, done by that Tarquin, Death.

and the remembrance of Shakespeare enjoying court favour lived for a century after his death, and was universally received as a truth. Otway, in his Prologue to 'Caius Marius,' 1692, thus alludes to it,—

> Our Shakespear wrote too in an age as blest,
> The happiest poet of his time and best;
> A gracious prince's favour chear'd his muse,
> A constant favour he ne'er fear'd to lose.
> Therefore he wrote with fancy unconfin'd,
> And thoughts that were immortal as his mind.

This subject might be very fully illustrated, but what is now before us will be sufficient. Charles I., also, was a diligent reader and admirer of Shakespeare, although neither he nor Prince Henry have yet been brought into direct connexion with the poet's history. This we know from Milton's well-known remark on the partiality of Charles for the works of the "sweet swan of Avon," and the king's own copy of the first folio, inscribed with his motto, and bearing marks of careful study, is still preserved in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

It has been already said that the Merry Wives of Windsor was written in 1593, and this fact is as well ascertained as any point of the kind can well be, where we have internal evidence alone for a guide.* Now, if the tradition above mentioned as recorded by Rowe be correct, it seems probable that the play of Henry IV. was written before this period, for it has been proved that Sir John Oldcastle was originally the name of the well-known character Sir John Falstaff, and there appears every reason for believing the change of name was not made in the case of the Merry Wives of Windsor. "It may not be improper to observe," says Rowe, "that this part of Falstaff is said to have been written originally under the name of Oldcastle; some of that family being then remaining, the Queen was pleased to command him to alter it, upon which he made use of Falstaff." This statement is confirmed by a very curious dedication prefixed by Dr. James to his 'Legend and Defence of the Noble Knight and Martyr, Sir Jhon Oldcastel,' an unpublished MS., written about the year 1625, in the Bodleian Library,—

To my noble friend, Sir Henrye Bourchier.†

Sir Harrie Bourchier, you are descended of noble auncestrie, and, in the dutie of a good man, love to heare and see faire reputation preservd from slander and oblivion. Wherefore to you I dedicate this edition of Ocleve, where Sir Jhon Oldcastell apeeres to have binne a man of valour and vertue, and onely lost in his owne times because he would not bowe under the foule superstition of Papistrie, from whence, in so great light of Gosple and learning, that there is not yet a more universall departure is to me the greatest scorne of men. But of this more in another place, and in preface will you please to heare me that which followes. A young gentle ladie of your acquaintance, having read the

* See my introduction to the First Sketch of Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 8vo. 1842. Mr. Knight's account of a contemporary work describing the visit of a German duke to England in 1592, is the most curious illustration of this play yet produced.

† This letter was first published by me in a little work "On the Character of Sir John Falstaff, as originally exhibited by Shakespeare in the two parts of King Henry IV." 12mo. 1841, and some of the observations in the text are adopted from that publication, with a few trifling variations.

works of Shakespeare, made me this question: How Sir Jhon Falstaffe, or Fastolf, as it is written in the statute book of Maudlin Colledge in Oxford, where everye daye that societie were bound to make memorie of his soule, could be dead in Harrie the Fifts time and againe live in the time of Harrie the Sixt to be banisht for cowardize? Whereto I made answeare that this was one of those humours and mistakes for which Plato banisht all poets out of his commonwealtth; that Sir Jhon Falstaffe was in those times a noble valiant souldier, as apeeres by a book in the Heralds Office dedicated unto him by a herald whoe had binne with him, if I well remember, for the space of 25 yeeres in the French wars; that he seemes allso to have binne a man of learning, because, in a librarie of Oxford, I finde a book of dedicating churches sent from him for a present unto Bisshop Wainflete, and inscribed with his owne hand. That in Shakespeare's first shewe of Harrie the Fift, the person with which he undertook to playe a buffone was not Falstaffe, but Sir Jhon Oldcastle,* and that offence beinge worthily taken by personages descended from his title, as peradventure by manie others allso whoe ought to have him in honourable memorie, the poet was putt to make an ignorant shifte of abusing Sir Jhon Falstophe, a man not inferior of vertue, though not so famous in pictie as the other, whoe gave witnesse unto the truth of our reformation with a constant and resolute martyrdom, unto which he was pursued by the priests, bishops, moncks, and friers of those dayes. Noble sir, this is all my preface. God keepe you, and me, and all Christian people from the bloodie designes of that cruell religion.

Yours in all observance,

RICH. JAMES.

With respect to this important letter, it will be observed that, by the "first shewe of Harrie the Fift," James unquestionably means Shakespeare's Henry IV. He could not have confused Shakespeare's play with "The Famous Victories," for in the latter drama the name of the character of Oldcastle had not been altered. The "young gentle

* In Amends for Ladies, 4to. Lond. 1639, a play by Nathaniel Field, which, according to Mr. Collier, could not have been written before 1611, Falstaff's description of honour is mentioned by a citizen of London as if it had been delivered by Sir John Oldcastle:

——— I doe heare
Your Lordship this faire morning is to fight,
And for your honor. Did you never see
The play where the fat knight, hight Old-castle,
Did tell you truely what this honor was?

ladie" had read the *works* of Shakespeare, most probably the folio edition, and it is not at all likely she would have alluded to a play which had then been entirely superseded. James and his fair acquaintance also confuse the characters of Fastolf and Falstaff, another example of the unfortunate circumstance of the poet choosing a name so similar to that of the real hero. It is by no means impossible that religious prejudices may have been the real occasion of the necessity for cancelling the name of Oldcastle.

There must of course be great uncertainty in fixing the precise date when Shakespeare made the alteration in the name of the character of his fat knight; and my conjecture on this point depends in a great measure upon the date of the Merry Wives of Windsor. Believing the first sketch of the Merry Wives to have been written in the year 1593, the name of Oldcastle was probably changed to Falstaff before that sketch was written. Everything tends to prove this. For instance, the first metrical piece which occurs in it could not have been written with the former name:

> And I to Ford will likewise tell
> How Falstaff, varlet vile,
> Would have her love, his dove would prove,
> And eke his bed defile.

It may be objected that, as the Merry Wives has little or no necessary connexion with the historical plays—as we have no certain evidence to show whether it was written before or after the two parts of Henry IV., the settlement of the question of names, if I may so express myself, in the former, is no guide whatever to the period at which the change was made in the other plays. In reply, I must confess this position is hypothetical, unless my readers agree with me in believing the Merry Wives to have been written after the Second Part of Henry IV., and before

Henry V., a subject which it would be irrelevant to discuss in this place.*

The exact chronology of the productions of Shakespeare's muse will probably never be ascertained, but we can safely refer many of his sonnets and poems to a very early period of his life. Meres, writing about the year 1597, mentions "his sugred sonnets among his private friends," a passage full of meaning, and almost sufficient of itself not only to confirm Mr. Dyce's opinion, "after repeated perusals of the sonnets, that the greater number of them was composed in an assumed character, on different subjects, and at different times, for the amusement, and probably at the suggestion, of the author's intimate associates;" but to dissipate the theory, promulgated at the expense of so much learning, that by W. H., the person to whom the first edition of the sonnets was inscribed, was William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and that this nobleman is the object to whom they were originally addressed. However curious may be the apparently connected series, the publication of these compositions, in 1640, as poems on distinct subjects, shows in what light they were considered at that time, and the late Mr. Bright possessed a MS. in which the eighth sonnet appears as a separate essay in praise of music,—†

* The early allusions in other writers to the character of Falstaff being so much more numerous than those to Oldcastle, may be considered as an argument in favour of the opinion that the change of name was made soon after the appearance of the play. Amongst others, I do not think the following have been noticed by writers on this subject:—"His postlike legges were answerable to the rest of the great frame which they supported, and, to conclude, Sir Bevis, Ascapart, Gogmagog, or our English Sir John Falstaff, were but shrimps to this bezzeling bombard's longitude, latitude, altitude, and crassitude, for he passes and surpasses the whole Germane multitude."—*Taylor's Workes*, ed. 1630, iii. 80. "Sir John Falstaffe robb'd with a bottle of sacke; so doth hee take mens purses with a wicked roule of tobacco at his girdle."—*New and Choise Characters of Severall Authors*, 1615.

† "Shakespear sais he was deeply delighted with the singing of Dowland the lutanist, but Spencers deep conceits he thought surpassed all others. See in his sonnets the Friendly Concord. That . . . John Dowland and Tho. Morley or W. Bird are said to have set several of those sonnets to musick as well as others."—*Oldys, MS. notes to Langbaine.* In 1597, Weelkes published the music to the poem commencing, "My flocks feed not."

In laudem musice et opprobrium contemptorii ejusdem.

1.

Musicke to heare, why hearest thou musicke sadly ?
Sweete wth sweetes warre not, joy delights in joy;
Why lovest y^u^ that wch thou receavest not gladly,
Or els receavest wth pleasure thine annoy?

2.

If the true concord of well tuned soundes
By unions maried, doe offend thy care,
They doe but sweetlie chide thee, whoe confoundes
In singlenes a parte wch thou shouldst beare.

3.

Marke howe one stringe, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each on each by mutuall orderinge,
Resemblinge childe, and syer, and happy mother,
W^ch^ all in one this single note dothe singe:
Whose speechles songe, beeinge many, seeming one,
Singe this to thee, Thou single shalt prove none.

W. Shakspeare.

There are several of the sonnets which, I think, could only have been produced at a very early age, some most probably before his marriage; and the quibbling stanza, quoted at p. 110, may be regarded as one amongst many proofs of this which might be pointed out. Many of them were no doubt composed at Stratford.* They were anterior to the beautiful poem 'Venus and Adonis,' which was published by Shakespeare in 1593, as "the first heir of my invention," no doubt his first production of any magnitude. This was followed in 1594 by the publication of 'Lucrece,' and both these poems attained great popularity, and were frequently reprinted. It is remarkable that con-

* The boundary elm represented on the next page is one of the few relics of Shakespeare's Stratford, and this summer is the last of its existence, for it has died of old age, and must give way for another. This tree is mentioned in a perambulation dated 1591, and being within a few hundred yards of the poet's birthplace, was doubtlessly a familiar object with him.

The boundary elm, Stratford.

temporary writers refer to them much oftener than to the plays. In the year in which 'Lucrece' was published, Willobie thus alludes to it in his 'Avisa,' 4to. 1594,—

> Though Collatine have deerely bought
> To high renowne a lasting life,
> And found that most in vaine have sought
> To have a faire and constant wife;
> Yet Tarquyne pluct his glistering grape,
> And Shake-speare paints poore Lucrece rape.

and a marginal note to a work entitled 'Polimanteia,' 4to. 1595, informs us that "all praise" the Lucretia of "sweet Shakespeare." Barnefield, in his 'Poems in Divers Humors,' 1598,* rests the poet's reputation on these poems,—

* There is a very curious copy of this work, written in cypher, among the Ashmolean MSS. No. 1153. See Mr. Black's Catalogue, col. 1020.

And Shakespeare, thou, whose hony-flowing vaine,
Pleasing the world, thy praises doth obtaine,
Whose Venus and whose Lucrece (sweete and chaste)
Thy name in fame's immortall booke have plac't;
Live ever you, at least in fame live ever:
Well may the bodye dye, but fame dies never.

Mr. Collier has mentioned several other testimonies of the same kind. We may conclude with the following, which occurs as late as 1614, in Freeman's 'Rubbe and a Great Cast,' a curious collection of epigrams, and does not appear to have been yet quoted:

To Master W. Shakespeare.

Shakespeare, that nimble Mercury, thy braine,
Lulls many hundred Argus-eyes asleepe;
So fit for all thou fashionest thy vaine.
At th' horse-foote fountaine thou hast drunk full deepe;
Vertues or vices theame to thee all one is:
Who loves chaste life, there's Lucrece for a teacher,
Who list read lust, there's Venus and Adonis,
True modell of a most lascivious leatcher.
Besides in plaies thy wit windes like Meander,
When needy new-composers borrow more
Thence (*sic*) Terence doth from Plautus or Menander:
But to praise thee aright I want thy store.
Then let thine owne works thine owne worth upraise,
And help t'adorne thee with deserved baies.

'Venus and Adonis' appeared in 1593, with a sort of apologetic dedication to Henry, Earl of Southampton,—"I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolished lines to your lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a prop to support so weak a burden; only if your Honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours till I have honoured you with some graver labour." The dedication to 'Lucrece,' 1594, is in a tone far more confident,—"The warrant I have of your honourable disposition,

not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance: what I have done is yours; what I have to do is yours; being part in all I have devoted yours." These dedications are precious fragments, the only letters of Shakespeare that have descended to our times. It would appear from them that Lord Southampton had rewarded the author of 'Venus and Adonis,' and Mr. Collier ingeniously conjectures that the munificent gift of that nobleman to Shakespeare, recorded by Rowe, was presented in return for the dedication to that poem, and was partially employed by the great dramatist as his contribution to the erection of the Globe theatre; but it must not be forgotten that the date of publication in these matters is no positive criterion, for, although 'Venus and Adonis' was not published till 1593, the MS. of it with the dedication might have been presented to Lord Southampton long before that period. Rowe speaks of the gift I have alluded to with great diffidence. "There is," he says, "one instance so singular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakspeare's, that if I had not been assured that the story was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I should not have ventured to have inserted, that my Lord Southampton at one time gave him a thousand pounds to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to." This amount must be exaggerated, for, considering the value of money in those days, such a gift is altogether incredible. Apart from this limitation, there is every reason for believing the general truth of Rowe's account.*

The Globe theatre was erected about the year 1594, and was used for dramatic performances by the Lord Chamber-

* This tradition is also mentioned by Oldys in a commonplace book, MS. Addit. 12523, p. 127, which is apparently an independent authority.

lain's servants during the summer, their other house in the Blackfriars being their winter theatre. The Globe was not sufficiently warm or protected from the weather to be used in the winter time, and it seems that early in the year 1596 the company were desirous of repairing and enlarging the Blackfriars theatre, "to make the same more convenient for the entertainment of auditories coming thereto." In this project they were opposed by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who appear to have been great enemies to theatrical amusements, and the players therefore found it necessary to petition the Privy Council, which they did in the following curious document, discovered by Mr. Collier in the State Paper Office:—

To the right honourable the Lords of her Majesties most honourable Privie Councell.

The humble petition of Thomas Pope, Richard Burbadge, John Hemings, Augustine Phillips, William Shakespeare, William Kempe, William Slye, Nicholas Tooley, and others, servaunts to the Right Honorable the Lord Chamberlaine to her Majestie.

Sheweth most humbly, that your petitioners are owners and players of the private house, or theatre, in the precinct and libertie of the Blackfriers, which hath beene for many yeares used and occupied for the playing of tragedies, comedies, historics, enterludes, and playes. That the same, by reason of its having beene so long built, hath fallen into great decay, and that besides the reparation thereof, it has beene found necessarie to make the same more convenient for the entertainement of auditories coming thereto. That to this end your petitioners have all and eche of them put down sommes of money, according to their shares in the said theatre, and which they have justly and honestly gained by the exercise of their qualitie of stage-players; but that certaine persons, (some of them of honour) inhabitants of the said precinct and libertie of the Blackfriers, have, as your petitioners are infourmed, besought your honourable lordshipps not to permitt the said private house any longer to remaine open, but hereafter to be shut up and closed, to the manifest and great injurie of your petitioners, who have no other meanes whereby to maintain their wives and families, but by the exercise of their qualitie as they have heretofore done. Furthermore, that in the summer season your petitioners are able to playe at their new built house on the Bankside calde the Globe, but that in the winter they are compelled to come to the Blackfriers; and if your honorable Lordshipps give consent unto that which is prayde against your petitioners, they will not onely,

while the winter endures, loose the meanes whereby they now support themselves and their families, but be unable to practise themselves in anie playes or enterludes, when calde upon to perform for the recreation and solace of her Matie and her honorable court, as they have beene heretofore acustomed. The humble prayer of your petitioners therefore is, that your honorable lordshipps will grant permission to finish the reparations and alterations they have begun; and as your petitioners have hitherto been well ordred in their behaviour, and just in their dealings, that your honorable lordshipps will not inhibit them from acting at their above namde private house in the precinct and libertie of the Blackfriers, and your petitioners, as in dutie most bounden, will ever pray for the increasing honor and happinesse of your honorable lordshipps.

This petition was only partially successful, the Lords of the Council permitting the company to repair the theatre, "butt not to make the same larger then in former tyme hath bene."* It will be observed that in this document the actors named are termed "owners and players," and that each of them had "put down sommes of money, according to their shares in the said theatre." *Owner* was a term of greater import than *sharer*, and we may conclude that Shakespeare in 1596 was in possession of a permanent interest in the Blackfriars theatre. For the next discovery respecting the poet we are again indebted to the untiring zeal of Mr. Collier.† It appears that Alleyn's Bear-garden was a source of annoyance to some of the inhabitants of Southwark who resided in its immediate vicinity, and in July 1596 they made a formal complaint of their grievances, Shakespeare being one of the complainants. It is thus established that Shakespeare resided near the Bear-garden in Southwark at that period. The following curious

* See a letter quoted by Mr. Collier, p. 156.

† Mr. Collier, however, has not discovered the purport of the document. When Malone mentioned the MS. in 1796, in his Inquiry, p. 215, he probably had other papers with it detailing more particularly the object of complaint, otherwise he could not have concluded from the paper here printed that "our poet appears to have lived in Southwark, *near the Bear-garden*, in 1596." The incessant noise and tumult raised by this place of amusement must have been a source of great annoyance to the immediate neighbourhood.

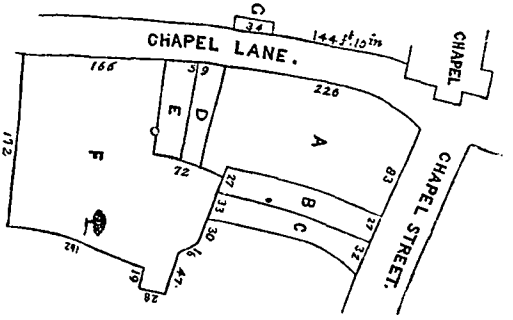
paper relating to this subject is preserved at Dulwich College:—

Inhabitantes of Sowtherk as have complaned this . . . . . of Jully, 1596.

Mr. Markis.
Mr. Tuppin.
Mr. Langorth.
Wilsone the pyper.
Mr. Barett.
Mr. Shaksper.
Phellipes.
Tomson.
Mother Golden the baude.
Nagges.
Fillpott, and no more, and soe well ended.

Shakespeare was still a very young man, and probably had not been familiar to a metropolitan audience for more than ten years, when, turning to the revered scene of his nativity, he meditated the first investment in property his professional gains enabled him to accomplish. The persecution of the great may have driven the poet from the home of his youth, and an undue exercise of power might, as in many other cases, have been an instrument for raising the oppressed, and indelibly marking the memory of him who was "drest in a little brief authority." Be this as it may, it is certain that Shakespeare's departure from Stratford arose in no action of his own that would materially diminish the esteem and respect of his early neighbours and friends, for had this been the case, it would have been difficult to imagine the anxiety with which he seems to have established himself once more in his native town, on the first opportunity that presented itself. Early in the year 1597, he purchased one of the best houses in Stratford, a dwelling-house called New Place, described as consisting of one messuage, two barns, and two gardens, with their appurtenances. The exact period at which this purchase was

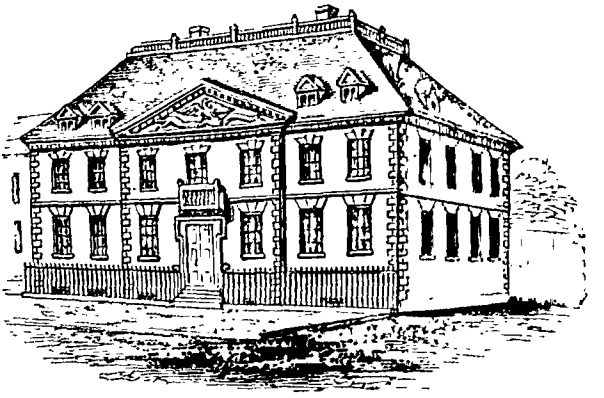
made has never before been ascertained, although Mr. Collier by a course of reasoning concludes that it was in 1597. Shakespeare bought New Place of William Underhill in the Easter Term, 39 Eliz. 1597, for £60, as appears from the following foot of the fine, levied on that occasion, preserved in the Chapter House, Westminster.



Inter Willielmum Shakespeare quer. et Willielmum Underhill generosum deforc. de uno mesuagio, duobus horreis, et duobus gardinis, cum pertinentiis, in Stratford super Avon, undè placitum convencionis sum. fuit inter eos &c. scilicet quod prædictus Willielmus Underhill recogn. prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius Willielmi Shakespeare ut illa quæ idem Willielmus habet de dono prædicti Willielmi Underhill, et ill. remisit et quictclam. de se et hæred. suis prædicto Willielmo Shakespeare et hæred. suis in perpetuum; et præterea idem Willielmus Underhill concessit pro se et hæred. suis quod ipsi warant. prædicto Willielmo Shakespeare et hæred. suis prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis in perpetuum. Et pro hac &c. idem Willielmus Shakespeare dedit prædicto Willielmo Underhill sexaginta libras sterlingorum. [Pasch. 39 Eliz.]

The annexed plan exhibits the site of New Place (A), with the extensive grounds (F) originally connected with it. In the garden (marked F) was the celebrated mulberry-tree said to have been planted by Shakespeare, a scion of which now flourishes on the site of the parent stock. It has been generally said that Shakespeare, having repaired the house when he purchased it of Underhill in 1597, changed its name to New Place. This must be an error, for in a survey taken in 1590, preserved in the Carlton Ride Record Office,

we are told that "Willielmus Underhill gen. tenet libere quandam domum vocatam *the newe place* cum pertinentiis per reddit. per annum xij.*d.* sect. cur." It seems to have been one of the best houses in Stratford; and early in the sixteenth century, when it belonged to the Clopton family, it was called *the great house*. In the eighteenth century it was again in the possession of the Cloptons, and it was thoroughly repaired, and a modern front added, by Sir Hugh Clopton, who died there in 1751. The next possessor, a Rev. Francis Gastrell, pulled down the house, and destroyed the celebrated mulberry-tree. The tale has been too often told to need repetition, and the perpetrator of the mischief has already been sufficiently abused for his want of taste. No record has been preserved of the appearance of New Place as it existed in Shakespeare's time, but the following woodcut exhibits the house as it appeared after the alterations made by Sir Hugh Clopton.



There seems to be every reason for believing that New Place was not purchased by Shakespeare as a mere investment, but that it continued to be the residence of himself and his family till his death in 1616; and I am inclined to believe that any abode he occupied in London after 1597

was merely for his temporary convenience. A curious manuscript list, formed during a period when there was a great scarcity of grain, containing an account of corn and malt in Stratford in February, 1598, mentions Shakespeare as holding the large quantity of ten quarters, and it is further of importance, because it exhibits him as residing in Chapel-street ward, the part of the town in which New Place was situated. As a kind of negative evidence against the probability of John Shakespeare being then in good circumstances, it may be mentioned that his name does not occur in this list. The MS. is mentioned by Mr. Knight and quoted by Mr. Collier, but it is sufficiently curious to merit publication, and the reader will thus be enabled to judge of the proportion of corn held by Shakespeare in comparison with the quantity possessed by others:

Stratforde, Burrowhe, Warrwicke. } The noate of corne and malte taken the iiij.th of ffebruarii, 1597, in the xl.th yeare of the raigne of our moste gracious soveraigne ladie Queen Elizabethe, &c.

Woode Street Warde. Townesmens corne.

Jhon Sadler malte ij. qrs. malt.
Wm. Slatter and Wid. Parrott iiij. quarters malte.
Rychard Pyncke malte and bareley v. quarters, of wheate j. quarter.
George Roase malte ij. quarters.
Mr. Jhon Lane jun. ix. quarters, myle corne ij. quarters d.,* beanes iij. quarters.
James Elliotts viij. quarters wheat, iij. strikes.
Thomas Hornbie ij. quarters vj. strickes, myle corne j. quarter.
Thomas Lemster with hym iij. quarters.
Mr. Parsons malte viij. quarters, wheate ij. quarters d., woates xij. quarters, ffetches j. quarter, myll corne ij. quarters.
Jhon Tubbe xiij. quarters ij. stricks.
Thomas Wylkenson x. quarters.
Robert Sperpoynt in hys howse x. str.
Jhon Smythe draper ix. quarters d., mylecorne ij. strickes.
Jhon Page in hys howse iij. quarters, barley j. quarter.
Mr. Sturley v. quarters.

* This of course stands for a half. The numbers to each are repeated in the margin for the sake of casting up the total, but these do not seem to be worth giving.

Cicely Bainton vid. viij. quarters, barley iiij. quarters.
Rafe Lorde iij. quarters, myle corne viij. st.

Straingers malte.

Mr. Lyttleton xij. quarters att Sadlers.
Mr. Smythe of Wotton xj. quarters.
William Gibbarde ij. quarters.
Rychard Gibbarde j. quarter d.
Mr. Anthonie Nashe att George Roases howse, malte vij. quarters, pease iij. quarters.
Att Tubbes of one Walter Smythes j. quarter, and of William Yockesalls j. quarter.
Att Tho. Wylkensons of Mr. Antho. Nashes x. strickes.
Of Mr. Myddlemores iij. quarters.
Smythe of Rychard Astons j. quarter d.
Of Rychard Smythes of Roweington j. quarter halfe.
Att Mr. Sturleys
Sir Thomas Lucie xij. quarters d.
Of Mr. Anth. Nashe viij. quarters d.
Of Mr. Rychard Wyllyes iij. quarters.
Att Rafe Lordes of Sir John Conwayes vij. quarters d.

Henley Streèt Warde. Townesmens corne.

Edwarde Hunte xij. quarters 6 st. of brede corne.
Jhon Wheeler v. quarters of brede corne, xij. stricks.
Of olde William Caudreys iiij. quarters.
Robert Jonsons vij. strickes.
Jhon Wylmer xij. quarters, mylne corne xiiij. strickes.
Valentyne Tawnte iij. quarters.
Rycharde Hornbie iiij. quarters, myle corne ij. quarters.
Robert Willson jun. viij. quarters, brede corne ij. quarters, pease and beanes ij. quarters.
Aucker Aynsworthe xviij. quarters, myll corne xiiij. strike.
Thomas Allen baker, malte xxij. str. bred corne iiij. quarters.
William Green v. quarters.
Robert Brookes vj. quarters.
William Smythe ij. quarters, bredcorne iij. quarters.

Straingers.

Att Jhon Wheelers of Mr. Cowrtes of Oulborrowghe x. str.
Of George Bartons iij. quarters.
Att John Wyllmers of John, Sir ffowlke Grevyles cooke, xij. quarters.
Att William Greens of Mr. Barnes of Clyfforde ix. quarters.
Att Robert Brookes of one Jhon Coxe hys viij. quarters.
Of William Coxe hys xj. str.
Of another mans iij. quarters d.

Bridgstreet Warde. Townesmens corne.

Arter Cawdrey xj. quarters.
Jhon Smythe alias Cowrte iij. quarters d. bred corne j. quarter.
Rychard Ainge vj. strickes.
Mr. Hen. Wyllson iiij. quarters, bred corne ij. quarters.
Robert Butler vj. quarters d. bredcorne d. qr.
Lewes Hycoxe d. quarter, breddcorne d. qr.
Jhon Atwoode j. quarter, of John Luptons iiij. quarters.
Mrs. Ann Nashes iij. quarters, pease v. quarters.
Mr. Jhon Lane sen. xij. quarters more in green malte and barley xx.ti. quarters.
Edwarde Sheffylde iij. quarters.
Frauncys Bellars iij. quarters d.
William Cawdrey iiij. quarters.

Straingers malte.

Att Arter Cawdreys of Jhon Moores of Ipseley iiij. quarters.
Of widdowe Bunnes ij. quarters.
Att Mr. Hen. Wyllsons of Mr. Chyldes ix. quarters.
Att William Cawdreys jun. of Mr. Anthonye Shrimpton v. quarters.
Of ffrauncis Pallmers of Ladbrocke Perke v. quarters.
Att Mrs. Anne Nashes vid. of hyr son Humfrey Nashes viij. quarters.
Robert Wyllson sen. at Robert Butlers iij. quarters.

Sheep Street Warde. Townsmens corne.

Daniell Smythe viij. quarters, bredcorne j. quarter.
Wid. Roocke of Jhon Archardes a bachelor xiij. strickes.
Of wid. Byddles j. quarter.
Henry Smythe ix. quarters.
Mr. Rychard Tyler xv. quarters, myle corne j. quarter.
William Wyate xj. quarters.
Of old William Cawdrey iij. quarters.
Edmonde Wall v. quarters, bredcorne vj. str.
Rychard Boyes iiij. quarters d.
William Smarte o. o. o.

Straingers.

Att vid. Rookes of one Jhon Bakers of Charlecoate a bachelor v. quarters.
Att William Wyates of George Bartons vj. quarters.
Att Edmonde Walls of Jhon Hyggens of Tyddyngton ij. quarters.
Att Rychard Boyes of Mr. Smythes of Burmingham iij. quarters.
Of Robert Pennells, Sir Thomas Lucies servants, about xiij. quarters.

Chapple Street Warde. Townsmens corne.

ffrauncys Smythe jun. iij. quarters.
Thõn Coxe v. quarters.
Mr. Thomas Dyxon xvij. quarters.
Mr. Thomas Barber iij. quarters.
Mychaell Hare v. quarters.
Mr. Bifielde vj. quarters.
Hughe Aynger vj. quarters.
Thomas Badsey vj. quarters, bareley j. quarter.
Thon Rogers x. str.
Wm. Emmetts viij. quarters.
Mr. Aspinall about xj. quarters.
Wm. Shackespere x. quarters.
Julii Shawe vij. quarters.

Julius Shaw's house, Stratford.

Straingers.

Rycharde Dyxon hathe of Sir Thomas Lucies xvj. quarters.
Of Sir Edw. Grevyls x. quarters.
Of Edy. Kennings iiij. quarters.
Mr. Bifielde of his systers iiij. quarters.
Hughe Ainger of hys wyves systers one quarter.
William Emmetts of one Nickes of Whatcoate iiij. quarters, of ffrauncys Tybbatts vj. str.

Highe Street Warde. Townesmens corne.

Jhon Smythe vint. x. strickes.
Smythe iremonger iij. quarters, myle corne d. qr.
ffrauncys Boyes xj. quarters, one quarter bareley.
Daniell Baker iij. quarters.
Mr. Quyney xiij. quarters, bareley viij. strickes, mylecorne x. strickes.
Henrye Walker vj. quarters, bareley j. quarter, beanes iiij. quarters.
Mr. Thomas Rogers vij. quarters, rye iiij. quarters, myle corne ij. quarters.

Straingers.

Francys Boyes hathe of Wm. Holmes of Bydforde iij. quarters.
Daniell Baker of Mr. Toovies of Coventree ij. quarters halfe.
Mr. Quyney of Mr. Huband hys malte vij. quarters.
Of Mr. Littletons vj. quarters.
Of one Gylles Rychardes v. quarters.
Of one Smythes of the Woodlande ij. quarters.
Mr. Rogers hathe of Mr. Hubands v. quarters iiij. str.
Somme iiij. c. xxxviij. quarters vj. str. of malte of townes mens.
Wheate and mylecorne xliiij. quarters halfe.
Pease, beanes, and fetches, xv. quarters.
Barley ix. quarters vj. stricke.
Somme of straingers malte ij. c. lj. quarters halfe.

From this period we find Shakespeare, at intervals of no long duration, engaged in transactions which exhibit him as a respectable inhabitant of Stratford, and if not occupied in agricultural matters, at least occasionally indulging in negotiations of a kindred character. This will appear more clearly by documents printed in a subsequent part of this volume. In 1598, the same year in which the MS. just printed was written, we discover him selling a load of stone to the corporation of Stratford, probably from his garden at New Place, for the sum of tenpence. This very curious fact I discovered in the Chamberlains' accounts for that year, and it seems to have quite escaped all notice,—

Pd. to Mr. Shaxspere for on lod of ston - - - - x.*d.*

That it relates to the poet there is no room for doubting, and this fact would almost appear evident from the list above

given. Shakespeare the shoemaker had left Stratford before 1598, and were not that the case, there is not the slightest probability that such an entry would refer either to him or to the poet's father.

Shakespeare's increasing wealth, and the importance and respect with which he was regarded at Stratford at this period, are very curiously illustrated by a letter preserved in the Council Chamber of that town, written by Abraham Sturley, January 24, 1597-8, in which he urges his correspondent to persuade Shakespeare to make a purchase at Shottery, and, among other inducements, mentions "the frendes he can make therefore," clearly exhibiting that the poet's desire to establish himself influentially at Stratford was well known to Sturley. It also appears that the purchase would have been advantageous to the corporation; "it obtained would advance him in deede, and would do us much good." Sturley also alludes to the high price of corn, thus illustrating the document above printed. This letter has hitherto been printed so incorrectly, that the reader may not be displeased to have the opportunity of perusing a complete copy of it, carefully taken from the original:

Most lovinge and belovedd in the Lord, in plaine Engl[i]she we remember u in the Lord, and ourselves unto u. I would write nothinge unto u nowe, but come home. I prai God send u comfortabli home. This is one speciall remembrance from ur ffathers motion. It semeth bi him that our countriman, Mr. Shakspere, is willinge to disburse some monei upon some od yarde land or other att Shottri or neare about us; he thinketh it a veri fitt patterne to move him to deale in the matter of our tithes. Bi the instructions u can geve him theareof, and bi the frendes he can make therefore, we thinke it a faire marke for him to shoote att, and not unpossible to hitt. It obtained would advance him in deede, and would do us much good. Hoc movere, et quantum in te est permovere, ne necligas, hoc enim et sibi et nobis maximi erit momenti. Hic labor, hic opus esset eximiæ et gloriæ et laudis sibi.

U shall understande, brother, that our neighbours are growne with the wantes they feele throughe the dearnes of corne (wc. heare is beionde all other countries that I can heare of deare and over deare), malecontent. Thei have

assembled togeather in a great nomber, and travelld to Sir Tho. Luci on ffriday last to complaine of our malsters: on Sundai to Sir ffoulke Gre. and Sir Joh. Conwai. I should have said on Wensdai to Sir Ed. Grevll first. Theare is a metinge heare expected to-morrowe. The Lord knoweth to what end it will sorte! Tho. West, returning ffrom the ij. knightes of the woodland, came home so full, that he said to Mr. Baily that night, he hoped within a weeke to leade of them in a halter, meaninge the malsters; and I hope, saith Jho. Grannams, if God send mi Lord of Essex downe shortli, to se them hanged on gibbettes att their owne dores.

To this end I write this cheifli, that as ur occasion shall suffer u to stai theare, theare might bi Sir Ed. Grev. some meanes made to the Knightes of the Parliament for an ease and discharge of such taxes and subsedies wherewith our towne is like to be charged, and I assure u I am in great feare & doubte bi no meanes hable to paie. Sir Ed. Gre. is gonne to Brestowe, and from thence to Lond., as I heare, who verie well knoweth our estates, and wilbe willinge to do us ani good.

Our great bell is broken, and Wm. Wiatt is mendinge the pavemente of the bridge.

Mi sister is chearefull, and the Lord hath bin mercifull and comfortable unto hir in hir labours, and, so that u be well imploied, geveth u leave to followe ur occasions for j. weeke or fortnight longer. I would u weare furnisht to pai Wm. Pattrike for me xj.*li.* and bring his quittance, for I thinke his specialtie is in Jho. Knight hand, due on Candlls. daie.

Yestrday I spake to Mr. Sheldon att Sir Tho. Lucies for the staie of Mr. Burtons suite, and that the cause might be referred to Mr. Walkrs of Ellington: he answered me that Mr. Bur. was nowe att Lond. and, with all his harte and good will, the suite should be staied, and the matter so referred. I have here inclosed a breife of the reckoninge betwene him and me, as I would have it passe, and as in æqitie it should passe, if he wilbe but as good as his faith and promise.

Good brother, speake to Mr. Goodale that there be no more proceadinge i tharches bi Mr. Clopton, whom I am content and most willing to compounde withall, and have bin ever since the beginninge of the laste terme, and thearefore much injured bi somebodie, that I have bin put to an unnecessarie charge of xx.*s.* and upwardes that terme; whereas I had satisfied Mr. Clopton, as I was credibli made beleve by some of his srvantes. I was allso assured of the staie of suite bi Mr. Barnes in the harvest, and bi Mr. Pendleburi the latter end of the terme. Mi brothr Woodwarde cometh up att the latter end of this weeke, who will speake with Mr. Clopton himselfe to that purpose.

U understande bi mi letter I sent bi our countriman Bur'll, that masse Brentt dispatchd 50*l.* for u. Jh. Sdlr. bounde alone as yeat. Because Mr. Barbr might not have it for 12. moneths, he would none att all, wherebi I loste mi expectation, and [am] leafte, I assure u, in the greatest neede of 30*l.* that possibli maie be. In truth, brother, to u be it spoken and to nonne els, for want thereof knowe skarce we. wai to turne me. Det Deus misericordiæ dominus exitum secundum bene placitum suum.

Ur fathr with his blessinge and comendation, mi sister with her loving remembrance, comendes hir: in health both, with all ur children and houshold ur fathr, extraordinari hartie, chearefull and lustie, hath sent u this remen brance inclosed.

It maie be u knowe him his executr and brother, I meane of whom ou brothr White borowed for me the 80*l.* paihable att Mai next; his name I hav not att hand. He dwelleth in Watlinge Streate. If 40*l.* thereof might be pr cured for 6. monethes more, it would make me whole. I knowe it doeth u goc to be doing good, and that u will do all the good u can.

I would Hanlett weare att home, satisfied for his paines taken before h cominge, and so freed from further travell.

Nunc Deus omnipotens, opt. max. pater omnimodæ consolationis, benedic tibi in viis tuis, et secundet te in omnibus tuis per Jhesum Christum, Dominu nostrum; amico dum ullus sum tuis tum (?)

Stretfordia, Januarii 24. ABRAH. STRL.

Commend me to Mr. Tom Bur'll, and prai him ffor me and mi bro. Da. Bak to looke that J. Tub maie be well hooped, that he leake not out lawe to ou hurte for his cause: quod partim avidio non nihil suspicor et timeo.

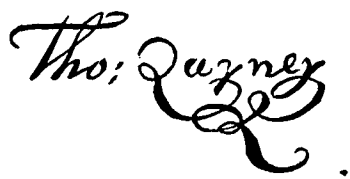
Receved of Mr. But:

In beanes 23 qrs. att 3*s.* 4*d.* the strike - - -	30*l.*	13*s.*	4*d.*
Barlei 8 qrs. and 4 str. att 4*s.* the str. - - -	13*l.*	12*s.*	0*d.*
Wheate 4 qrs. 4 str. att 6*s.* 8*d.* the str. - - -	12*l.*	0*s.*	0*d.*
	56*l.*	5*s.*	4*d.*

I have paid and sowed thearcof, 52*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*

Mi Lad. Gre. is run in arreages with mi sister for malt (as it seemeth), wc. hindreth and troubleth hir not a littell.

The following curious letter, which contains a notice of Shakespeare, and has never yet been mentioned, tends to show that the poet was engaged in pecuniary transactions with persons at Stratford. It is not dated, but it was most



likely written in the same year as the last, 1598, and certainly before May, 1602, at which time died the writer,

Richard Quiny, whose son Thomas married Shakespeare's youngest daughter:

To my lovynge sonne Rychard Quyney at the Belle in Carter Layne deliver thesse in London.

You shalle, God wyllynge, receve from youre wyfe by Mr. Baylye thys letter asurance of x.*s.*, and she wolde have yow to bye some grocerye, yff hyt be resonable; yow maye have carryage by a womman who I wylled to com to you. Mr. Layne by report hath receved a great summ of money of Mr. Smyth of Wotten, but wylle not be knowyn of hytt, and denyd to lend youre wyff any, but hys wyff sayd that he hade receved v.*li.* which was gevyn hyr, and wyshd hym to lent that to youre wyff, which he dyde; she hopyth to mayk Aysshon to paye Mr. Combes and alle the rest. I wrot to yow concerning Jhon Rogersse; the howsse goythe greatly to dekaye; ask . . . . therin, and doo somewhat therein, as she ys in doubt that Mr. Parsonsse wylle not paye the 3*li.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Wherfore wryte to hym yff yow maye have carryage to bye some such warys as yow maye selle presentlye to profet. Yff you bargen with Wm. Sha. or receve money ther, or brynge youre money home, yow maye. I see howe knite stockynges be sold; ther ys gret byinge of them at Aysshone. Edward Wheat and Harrye, youre brother man, were both at Evysham thys daye senet, and as I harde bestow 20*li.* there in knyt hosse; wherefore I thynke yow maye doo good, yff yow can have money.

Another letter, dated November 4th, 1598, contains a third allusion to Shakespeare, and also relates to the subject of money; not a very poetical theme, but one in which the dramatist evidently took a lively interest, having seen, perhaps, that "if money go before, all ways do lie open," and that it is "a good soldier, and will on." These are proverbial truths, the force of which have been felt in all ages and countries, and have not been in any way extinguished by the progress of civilization.

Nov. 4, 1598. All health, happines of suites and wellfare, be multiplied unto u and ur labours in God our ffather bi Christ our Lord.

Ur letter of the 25. of October came to mi handes the laste of the same att night per Grenwai, which imported a stai of suites by Sr. Ed. Gr. advise, untill &c. and that onli u should followe on for tax and sub. presentli, and alſso ur travell and hinderance of answere therein, bi ur longe travell and thaffaires of the Courte: And that our countriman Mr. Wm. Shak. would procure us monei, we. I will like of, as I shall heare when, and wheare, and howe; and I prai lot

not go that occasion, if it mai sorte to ani indifferent condicions. Allso that if monei might be had for 30 or 40*l.*, a lease, &c. might be procured. Oh howe can u make dowbt of monei, who will not beare xxx.tie or xl.*s.* towardes sutch a match! The latter end of ur letter wc. concerned ur houshold affaires I delivered presently: nowe to ur other letter of the 1st of November receved the 3d. of the same. I would I weare with u; nai, if u continue with hope of those suictes u wrighte of, I thinke I shall wt. concent; and I will most willingli come unto u, as had u but advise and compani, and more monei presente, much might be done to obtaine our Cr. enlarged, ij. faires more, with tole of corne, bestes, and sheepe, and a matter of more valewe then all that; for (sai u) all this is nothinge that is in hand, seeinge it will not rise to 80*l.* and the charges wilbe greate. What this matter of more valewe meaneth I cannot undrstand; but me thinketh whatsoever the good would be, u are afraid of want of monei. Good thinges in hand or neare hand can not choose but be worth monei to bringe to hand, and beinge assured, will, if neede be, bringe monei in their mouthes; there is no feare nor dowbte. If it be the rest of the tithes and the College houses and landes in our towne u speake of, the one halfe weare abundantli ritch for us; and the other halfe to increase Sr. Ed. riallties would both beare the charge and sett him sure on: the wc. I take to be your meaninge by the latter parte of ur letter, where u write for a copie of the particulars (wc. allso u shall have accordingli). Oh howe I feare, when I se what Sr. Ed. can do, and howe neare it sitteth to him selfe, leaste he shall thinke it to good for us, and procure it for himselfe, as he served us the last time; for it semeth by ur owne wordes theare is some of hit in ur owne conceite, when u write if Sr. Ed. be as forward to do as to speake, it will be done: a dowbt I assure you not without dowbt to be made: whereto allso u ad, notwithstandinge that dowbt no want but monei. Somewhat must be to Sr. Ed. and to each one that dealeth somewhat and great reason. And me thinketh u need not be affraid to promise that as fitt for him, for all them, and for urselfe. The thinge obtained no dowbte will pai all. For present advise and encouragmente u have bi this time Mr. Baili, and for monei, when u certifie what u have done, and what u have spent, what u will do, and what u wante; somewhat u knowe we have in hand, and God will provide that wc. shall be sufficient. Be of good cowrage. Make fast Sr. Ed. by all meanes, or els all our hope and ur travells be utterli disgraced. Consider and advise if Sr. Ed. will be faste for us, so that bi his goodwill to us and his meanes for us these thinges be brought about. What weare it for the fee-farme of his riallties, nowe not above xij. or xiij.*l.* he weare assured of the dowble, when these thinges come to hande, or more, as the goodnes of the thinge procured proveth. But whi do I travell in these thinges, when I knowe not certainli what u intende, neither what ur meanes are, nor what are ur difficulties preciseli and bi name, all wc. must be knowe bi name, and specialli with an estimate of the charge, before ani thinge can be added either for advise or supplie. I leave these matters therefore unto the Allmighties mercifull disposition in ur hand, untill a more neare possibilite or more leisure will encourage u or suffer u to write more plainli and particularli. But withall the

Chancell must not be forgotten, we. allso obtained would yeald some pretti gub of monei for ur present busines, as I thinke. The particulars u write for shalle this morninge be dispatched and sent as soone as mai be. All is well att home; all your paimentes made and dispatchd; mi sister saith if it be so that u can not be provided for Mrs. Pendlbur, she will, if u will, send u up x.*l.* towardes that by the next after, or if u take it up, pai it to who u appointe. Wm. Wallford sendeth order and monei per Wm. Court nowe cominge, who hath some cause to feare, for he was neweli served with proces on Twsdai last att Alcr. per Roger S.

Mr. Parsons supposeth that Weilock came the same dai with Mr. Baili that u writt ur letter. He saith he supposeth u mai use that x.*l.* ffor our borrowinge matters. Wm. Wiatt answered Mr. Ba. and us all, that he would neither borrowe himselfe, nor submitt himselfe to the order, but bi those veri wordes make against it with all the strength he could possibli make, yeat we do this dai begin Mr. Bar. and miselfe a littell for assai. My bro. D. B. att Shrewsburi or homeward from thence. But nowe the bell hath runge mi time spent. The Lord of all power, glori, merci, and grace and goodnes, make his great power and mercie knowen towardes us in ur weakenes. Take heed of tabacco, whereof we heare per Wm. Perri; against ani longe journei u mai undertake on foote of necessiti, or wherein the exercise of ur bodi must be imploied, drinke some good burned wine, or aquavitæ and ale strongli mingled without bread for a taste, and, above all, keepe u warme. Farewell, mi dare heart, and the Lord increase our loves and comfortes one to another, that once it mai be sutch as becometh Christianiti, puriti, and sinceriti, without staine or blemishe. Fare ye well; all ur and ours well. ffrom Stretford, Novem. 4, 1598.

urs in all love in the best bond,

ABRAH. STURLEI.

Mrs. Coomb, when Gilbert Charnocke paid them their monei, as he told me, said that if ani but he had brought it, she would not receve it, because she had not hir gowne; and that she would arrest u for hit as soone as u come home, and much twattell; but att the end, so that youe would pai 4*l.* toward hit, she would allowe u xx.*s.* and we shall heare att some leasure howe fruictes are, and hoppes, and sutch knakkes. Att this point came Wm. Sheldon, the silke man, with a warrant to serve Wm. Walford againe upon a trespasse of 500*l.*

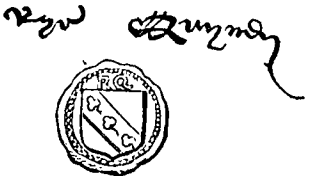
To his most lovinge brother, Mr. Richard Quinei, att the Bell in Carterlane att London, geve these. Paid 2d.

I am scarcely willing to hazard the conjecture that after Shakespeare had obtained a capital in ready money, he increased it by supplying loans at interest; but there really seems to be fair grounds for such an opinion. Mr. Wheler

possesses one of the most curious documents connected with Shakespeare known to exist, a letter from Richard Quiny to the poet, requesting the loan of £30 on his own security joined with that of a friend. It may relate to the same subject alluded to in the letter printed at p. 175, but it does not clearly appear that such was the case. Our readers must be warned to bear constantly in mind the value of money at that early period, £30 in 1598 being at least equivalent to £120 at the present time, and it will then be seen in what pecuniary circumstances Shakespeare must have been for an application to be made to him for a loan of that amount, Quiny evidently writing in the full conviction that the poet was able, without the slightest difficulty, to advance the money.

Loveinge contreyman, I am bolde of yow, as of a ffrende, craveinge yowr helpe with xxx.*li.* uppon Mr. Bushells and my securytee, or Mr. Myttens with me. Mr. Rosswell is nott come to London as yeate, and I have especiall cawse. Yow shall ffrende me muche in helpeinge me out of all the debettes I owe in London, I thanck God, and muche quiet my mynde, which wolde nott be indebted. I am nowe towardes the Cowrte, in hope of answer for the dispatche of my buysenes. Yow shall nether loose creddytt nor monney by me, the Lorde wyllinge; and nowe butt perswade yowrselfe soe, as I hope, and yow shall nott need to feare, butt, with all hartie thanckefullnes, I wyll holde my tyme, and content yowr ffreende, and yf we bargaine farther, yow shalbe the paie-master yowrselfe. My tyme biddes me hasten to an ende, and soe I committ thys [to] yowr care and hope of yowr helpe. I feare I shall nott be backe thys night ffrom the Cowrte. Haste. The Lorde be with yow and with us all, Amen! ffrom the Bell in Carter Lane, the 25. October, 1598.

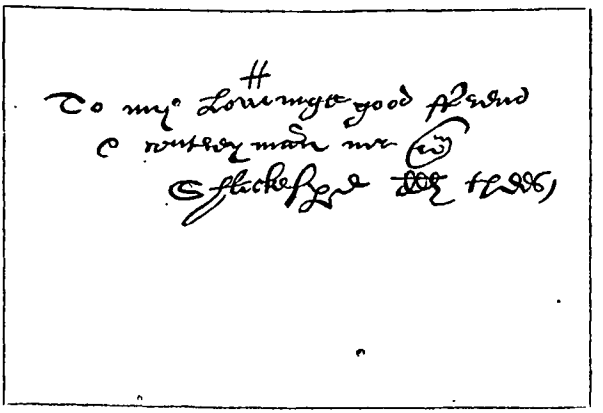
Yowrs in all kyndenes,



To my loveinge good ffrend and contreyman Mr. Wm. Shackespere deliver thees.

A precious document in the history of Shakespeare's social life, one that brings him before us as occupied in the

ordinary business of ordinary men. This is one of the few genuine relics of the great poet, nearly the only one we can safely avouch to have ever been in his own hands, and it is the only letter addressed to Shakespeare known to exist. It is a very small document, folding up in the exact size here indicated, and directed in the customary style of the period.



It appears probable that Shakespeare may, even at this early period, have had possessions of which no record, as far as he is concerned, now remains; for Mr. Hunter discovered his name in a subsidy roll of 1598, assessed on property of the value of £5, in the parish of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate. The original of this document is preserved at the Carlton Ride, and Mr. Hunter considers it proves Shakespeare was a resident in that parish in 1598, apparently overlooking the memorandum *affid.* attached to his name, which may possibly exhibit him as one of the parties who did not reside in the district, and were consequently compelled to produce certificates or affidavits of non-residence. If the poet ever did reside in that part of London it could only have been for a very short period.

Perhaps the exact nature of the property held by Shakespeare in St. Helen's may hereafter be discovered, but it is worthy of remark that his name does not occur in the roll of a subsidy levied two years afterwards. Mr. Hunter has considered the roll first mentioned sufficiently important to be quoted at considerable length, and I follow his example in printing the assessments for the parish of St. Helen's, correcting a few errors by the original document.

Busshopsgate.

This indenture, made the first day of October, in the fortyth yeare of the reigne of our sovereigne Lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God Queene of England, Fraunce, and Ireland, Defendour of the Faithe, &c. Betweene the right honorable Sir Richard Salltonstall, knight, Lord Maiour of the cyttie of London, Sir John Hart, and Sir Henry Billingsley, knightes, the Queenes Majestes commissioners, amongest others authorized by hir hignes commission under the greate scale of England for the taxacion, levyeing, and gatheringe of the first subsydie of the three entire subsidies latelie graunted to hir Majestie by hir highnes lay subjectes, by act of Parliament holden at Westminster in the xxxix.th yeare of hir Majestes reigne, within the sayd cytie of London, on thone partie, and Ferdynando Clutterbooke draper, and Thomas Symons skynner, cittizens of the sayd cytie, whome the sayd commissioners have named, deputed, and chosen, and by theise presentes doe name, depute, and choose to be pettye collectours of the sayd first subsydie in the ward of Bushoppsgate within the sayd citie, on thother partie, Witnesseth that the sayd Ferdinando Clutterbooke and Thomas Symons soe named, deputed, appointed, and chosen to bee pettie collectours in the sayd ward, and, authorized thereunto by theise presentes, shall receive, levye, collect, and gather of all and everye the severall persons hereafter named to the Queenes Majestes use, all such severall sommes of mony as in this presente extract beene taxed and assessed uppon them, and every of them, for theire severall values and substances, rated, specified, and conteyned, as hereafter followeth; that is to saye, of

St. Hellens Parishe.

Sir John Spencer, knight, a commissioner, ccc.*li.*—xl.*li.*
On. William Reade, in landes, cl.*li.*—xxx.*li.*
John Robinson the elder, c.*li.*—xiij.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Richard Taylor, doctour, in landes and fees, x.*li.*—xl.*s.*
Peter Turnor, doctour, in landes and fees, x.*li.*—xl.*s.*
Peter Dallyla, xxx.*li.*—iiij.*li.*
Affid. Robert Honywood, gent. in landes, xl.*li.*—viij.*li.*

John Allsoppe, l.*li.*—vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
John Morrys, xxx.*li.*—iiij.*li.*
Roberte Springe, xxx.*li.*—iiij.*li.*
Edward Swayne, in landes and fees, x.*li.*—xl.*s.*
Jeames Scoles, xx.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Joane Lomley, widdowe, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Anthony Snoade, x.*li.*—xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Jeames Roking, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Walter Briggen, v.*li.*—xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
John Robinson the yonger, x.*li.*—xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*
John Prymme, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Affid. William Shakespeare, v.*li.*—xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
George Axon, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Edward Jackson, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Edward Jorden, viij.*li.*—xxj.*s.* iiij.*d.*
John Jeffrey, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Christofer Eland, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Affid. Oswald ffetche, xx.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Affid. John Stockett Jeckett, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
John Susan, xx.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Sisley Eyoll, widdowe, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
William Winkefielde, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Thomas Childe, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Richard Rysbey, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Tymothe Bathurst, xx.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Jeames Elwicke, xx.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Affid. William Cherle, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Francis Wells, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Henry Mawnder, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Affid. Mr. Peole, x.*li.*—xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*
William Staffely, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*
Affid. Thomas Morley, v.*li.*—xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Henry Hetherband, iij.*li.*—viij.*s.*

Straungers.

Leven Vander Stylt, l.*li.*—xiij.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Affid. Jarrone Martyn, x.*li.*—liij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Peter Vegleman, xx.*li.*—v.*li.* vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
P. Sigill. Augustine de Bewly, xxv.*li.*—vj.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
John de Clarke, xv.*li.*—iiij.*li.*
Leven Vander Stiltes wief, per poll, viij.*d.*
Esay Mislonde, Mathew Stilton, and Barlery Capon, his servauntes, } per poll, ij.*s.*
Affid. Doctor Cullymore, v.*li.*—xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*
Affid. Laurence Bassell, v.*li.*—xxvj.*s.* viij.*d.*

Affid. Peter his sonne, per poll, viij.*d.*
Affid. Peter Greade, Davye ffayrecooke, and ffrauncis Dynne, servauntes, per poll, } ij.*s.*
Sherrett Bawkes, xl.*s.*—x.*s.* viij.*d.*
Joyce, his wief, Agnes, his servaunt, per poll, xvj.*d.*
Peter Vaudesker and his wief, per poll, xvj.*d.*
Affid. Anne Meredon, Augustine de Bewbynes mayd, viij.*d.*
Affid. Vincent Meringe and his wief, per poll, xvj.*d.*
P. Sig. John Varhagen, vj.*li.*—xxxij.*s.*
Affid. His wief, per poll, viij.*d.*
Affid. Mary Martin, his mayde, per poll, viij.*d.*
Barbara Lumbo, widdow, per poll, viij.*d.*
Affid. Mary de Boo, widdow, per poll, viij.*d.*
Affid. Michael Coosen, per poll, viij.*d.*
Affid. Joane and Frauncis, his servauntes, per poll, xvj.*d.*
Abraham Grannere, per poll, viij.*d.*

In 1598 Shakespeare was one of the principal actors in Ben Jonson's play of 'Every Man in his Humour,' performed by the Lord Chamberlain's servants at the Globe Theatre; and Rowe has handed us down an anecdote respecting rare Ben's introduction to the stage, which, if true, occurred not very long before the appearance of that comedy. "His acquaintance with Ben Johnson," he says, "began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good nature: Mr. Johnson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offer'd one of his plays to the players in order to have it acted, and the persons into whose hands it was put, after having turn'd it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natur'd answer that it would be of no service to their company, when Shakespear luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Johnson and his writings to the publick." In the first edition of his Life of Shakespeare, Rowe had added a long paragraph to this, omitted in the next impression, in the course of which he said, "after this they were profess'd friends,

tho' I don't know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleness and sincerity." There is nothing in this tradition dissonant to what is known of Jonson's career. Mr. Collier has succeeded in proving satisfactorily that Gifford's arguments against it are established on erroneous data, the play of *Umers*, mentioned in Henslowe's Diary, certainly not being Jonson's celebrated drama.

Rowe, in the first edition above mentioned, accuses Jonson of having been "naturally proud and insolent," and, referring to his alleged envious disposition, alludes to Ben's criticism on Shakespeare's "seldom altering or blotting out what he writ" as an evidence of this. Nothing can be more erroneous than such an inference, for Jonson's criticism was evidently written with a spirit of great kindness. But often as the passage (Timber, or Discoveries, 1641) has been quoted, it must be read once again, and the conclusion to be drawn from it will not coincide with Rowe's.

De Shakespeare nostrat.—Augustus in Hat.—I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing (whatsoever he penn'd) hee never blotted out line. My answer hath beene, Would he had blotted a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted; and to justifie mine owne candor, for I lov'd the man, and doe honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. Hee was (indeed) honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantsie, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein hee flow'd with that facility, that sometime it was necessary he should be stop'd: *Sufflaminandus erat*, as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his owne power; would the rule of it had beene so too. Many times hee fell into those things could not escape laughter: as when hee said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to him, "Cæsar, thou dost me wrong." Hee replyed, "Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause," and such like; which were ridiculous. But hee redeemed his vices with his vertues. There was ever more in him to be praysed then to be pardoned.

Heminge and Condell, in their address prefixed to the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, 1623, observe that "his mind and hand went together, and what he

thought, he uttered with that easinesse, that wee have scarse received from him a blot in his papers." Jonson "had not told posterity this, but for their [the players'] ignorance, who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted;" in fact, a deficiency in that careful retouching considered requisite by Jonson, the want of which even the most extravagant admirer of Shakespeare must admit is occasionally felt in his plays. This habit of writing with great rapidity occasioned, no doubt, the mistake which Jonson quotes from 'Julius Cæsar,' exactly one of those errors even the greatest genius might commit, and once committed, would, with the players, "be argument for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever." For some reason or other, perhaps from unnecessary but kindly feelings towards the memory of Shakespeare, the passage quoted by Jonson is mutilated in the folio edition of his works. Gifford is certainly right in believing that Jonson quoted correctly, and there is great additional evidence for this opinion in the fact that the passage had been previously quoted by him in the Induction to the Staple of News, acted in 1625. In fact, Jonson's anecdote enables us to make poetry of lines in Shakespeare which are absolutely mean and unintelligible without such assistance. Even with it they are not far from absurd. Had they been otherwise, where would have been the joke against Shakespeare? Metellus Cimber, one of the conspirators, kneeling, thus addresses Cæsar,—

> Most high, most mighty, and most puissant Cæsar,
> Metellus Cimber throws before thy seat
> An humble heart.—

but Cæsar quickly tells him how cheaply he holds "sweet words, low-crooked curtesies, and base spaniel fawning." Then does the emperor add,—

Know, Cæsar doth not wrong; nor without cause
Will he be satisfied.

A lame and impotent conclusion, only to be explained on the obscure principles of continental criticism, not by the exercise of common sense. Well may Gifford say, "here is no congruity, and the poetry is as mean as the sense." How satisfied, and of what? Take Jonson's words as literally true, and the whole becomes clear; not clear indeed as to Shakespeare's exact meaning, but it unfolds a dialogue not more obscure than many others in his plays; and without such an arrangement, the only alternative is to accuse Jonson of wilful misrepresentation for the sake of a jest against a deceased friend, a theory I should imagine the wildest critic would scarcely venture to adopt, now we have had the benefit of the discriminating labours of Gifford:—

Cæs. Thy brother by decree is banished;
If thou dost bend, and pray, and fawn for him,
I spurn thee like a cur out of my way!
Met. Cæsar, thou dost me wrong.
Cæs. Cæsar did never wrong but with just cause,*
Nor without cause will he be satisfied.

Ben Jonson's noble testimony "to the memory of my beloved, the author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us," is of itself sufficient to acquit him of any posthumous ill-feeling to his friend; yet it is remarkable that even in the first line he seems to allude to the charge of envy, that had been previously brought against him, as we know from some lines in Davies's 'Scourge of Folly,' which seem to imply that Jonson had been unfairly maligned. Fuller, in his 'Worthies,' 1662, speaking of Shakespeare, thus mentions his intimacy with rare Ben,—"Many were

* If *wrong* is taken in the sense of *injury* or *harm*, as Shakespeare sometimes uses it, there is no absurdity in this line. "He shall have no wrong," 2 Henry IV., v. 1.

the wit-combates betwixt him and Ben Johnson, which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion and an English man-of-war; Master Johnson, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in performances; Shake-spear, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides; tack about, and take advantage of all winds by the quickness of his wit and invention." Some of these wit-combats have been handed down to posterity, but are not of the most brilliant description, as will appear from the following specimen preserved in the Ashmolean MSS. at Oxford, No. 38, p. 181:

Mr. Ben. Johnson and Mr. Wm. Shake-speare being merrye att a tavern, Mr. Jonson haveing begune this for his epitaph,

Here lies Ben Johnson, that was once one.

he gives ytt to Mr. Shakspear to make upp, who presently wrightes,

Who while hee liv'de was a sloe thinge,
And now being dead is nothinge.

It is not particularly easy to appreciate the exact force of the wit here exhibited, but the anecdote comes to us in a "questionable shape," and is most probably corrupted. The conclusion of the first line of the epitaph should probably be "that was *one's son*," for in an early MS. common-place book I have seen the following lines, *B. Johnson in seipsum*,—

Heere lies Johnson,
Who was ones sonne:
Hee had a litle hayre on his chin,
His name was Benjamin!

an amusing allusion to his personal appearance, as any one may see who will turn to Ben's portrait. Oldys has preserved some lines by Jonson and Shakespeare contained in an early manuscript, and bearing greater marks of authenticity. They are entitled "verses by Ben Jonson and

Shakspeare, occasioned by the motto to the Globe Theatre, *totus mundus agit histrionem.*"

Jonson. If but stage actors all the world displays,
Where shall we find spectators of their plays?
Shakspeare. Little or much of what we see we do;
We are all both actors and spectators too.

Gifford has assumed that Shakespeare was a member of a convivial club established at the Mermaid by Sir Walter Raleigh, but for this I find no authority, however probable such a supposition may be in itself. Mr. Collier states it as a fact mentioned by Fuller, but he seems to have relied on Gifford's assertion without referring to the original authority, for Fuller says nothing on the subject. The following anecdote relating to these two poets is preserved in MS. Harl. 6395, entitled 'Merry Passages and Jeasts,' compiled by Sir Nicholas Lestrange during the civil wars, and is given on the authority of Mr. Dun.* Lattin was a kind of mixed metal, very much resembling brass in its nature and colour. Hence the force of the jest, which has been frequently printed:

Shake-speare was god-father to one of Ben Johnsons children, and after the christning, being in a deepe study, Johnson came to cheere him up, and askt him why he was so melancholy. No, faith, Ben, sayes he, not I; but I have beene considering a great while what should be the fittest gift for me to bestow upon my god-child, and I have resolv'd at last. I prythe what, sayes he. 'Ifaith, Ben, I'le e'en give him a douzen good Lattin spoones, and thou shalt translate them.

In an edition of the 'Town Jester,' without date, but printed about 1760, another anecdote occurs in which the

* It has been supposed that this refers to Donne the poet, a conjecture not very probable. A person of the name of Dun, "that kept the Mermaid Tavern in Cornhill," is mentioned in an anecdote in the Agreeable Companion, 1765, p. 343.

names of Shakespeare and Jonson are again mentioned in connexion with each other. According to this authority, "Ben Johnson and Shakespeare were once at a tavern-club where there were several lords from the court who went to hear their wit and conversation; Shakespeare call'd upon Ben Johnson to give a toast; he nam'd that lord's wife that sat near him; the nobleman demanded why he nam'd her: Why not, replied the poet, she has the qualifications of a toast, being both brown and dry; which answer made them all laugh, his lordship having been obliged to marry her against his inclinations." I need not add there is no probability for the truth of this story, which I find slightly altered, and attributed to Phillips the poet in another collection. The jest-books of the last century are worth examination, but a great similarity and much repetition are to be traced through them, and the same anecdotes are often given in the different collections to a variety of individuals. Much trash is there to be found sheltered under the names of the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In 1598, we find from Meres that Shakespeare, then thirty-four years of age, had written at least twelve plays, believing, as I think there is every reason to believe, that 'Love's Labours Won' is a play now lost, but perhaps hereafter to be discovered in some of our numerous unexplored collections of manuscripts. In his work entitled 'Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury, being the Second Part of Wits Commonwealth,' 12mo. Lond. 1598, he gives the following very curious notices of Shakespeare,—

As the soule of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honytongued Shakespeare; witnes his Venus and Adonis, his Lucrece, his sugred sonnets among his private friends, &c.

As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latines, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage; for comedy, witnes his Gentlemen of Verona, his Errors,

his Love Labors Lost, his Love Labours Wonne, his Midsummers Night Dreame, and his Merchant of Venice: for tragedy, his Richard the 2. Richard the 3. Henry the 4. King John, Titus Andronicus, and his Romeo and Juliet.

As Epius Stolo said that the muses would speake with Plautus tongue, if they would speak Latin, so I say that the muses would speak with Shakespeares fine filed phrase, if they would speake English.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that this has been quoted by all writers on the chronology of Shakespeare's plays. Romeo and Juliet, Richard II. and Richard III. were published in 1597, and were probably written earlier; and Weever, who, in 1596 or earlier, wrote a collection of Epigrams, published in 1599, thus alludes to them,—

Ad Gulielmum Shakespeare.

Honie-tongd Shakespeare, when I saw thine issue,
I swore Apollo got them, and none other;
Their rosie-tainted features clothed in tissue,
Some heaven-born goddesse said to be their mother.
Rose-cheeckt Adonis with his amber tresses,
Faire fire-hot Venus charming him to love her,
Chaste Lucretia, virgine-like her dresses,
Proud lust-stung Tarquine seeking still to prove her;
Romeo, Richard, more whose names I know not:
Their sugred tongues and power attractive beauty
Say they are saints, althogh that saints they shew not,
For thousand vowes to them subjective dutie.
They burn in love, thy children, Shakespeare, let them:
Go, wo thy muse! more nymphish brood beget them.

The first sketches of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI. had appeared in 1593, and Titus Andronicus is said to have been printed in 1594; but a doubt has arisen on the question whether the entry on the Stationers' Company registers, no copy of the book itself being known, refers to Shakespeare's play or another under the same title. It should be observed that Meres does not seem by any means to write as if the list he had given of Shakespeare's plays was more than a selection, and the tendency of modern

discovery is certainly towards the earlier composition of most of the plays than the older critics were willing to allow. Mr. Collier discovered that Othello* was acted at Harefield Place in the year 1602, the following entry occurring in accounts for that year in Lord Ellesmere's collection,—"6 August, 1602; rewardes to the vaulters, players and dauncers (of this x.*li.* to Burbidges players for Othello), lxiiij.*li.* xviij.*s.* x.*d.*" This play was therefore acted before Queen Elizabeth in July 1602, when she was entertained by Lord Keeper Egerton, and Mr. Collier seems to think it was selected because it was then a new play; but I do not see the force of this argument, which would be equally applicable to the notice of its performance at Court on Nov. 1st, 1604. I have evidence to produce which very clearly shows that this play was written before 1600, for in a MS. entitled 'The Newe Metamorphosis, or a Feaste of Fancie, or Poeticall Legendes, written by J. M. Gent. 1600,' occurs the following passage, evidently imitated from Shakespeare's well-known lines beginning "Who steals my purse, steals trash,"†—

> The highwayman that robs one of his purse
> Is not soe bad; nay, these are ten tymes worse!
> For these doe rob men of their pretious name,
> And in exchange give obloquie and shame.

It should be remarked that some additions were made by the author of this MS. several years after the date he

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* Othello was considered one of Shakespeare's masterpieces at a very early period. It is mentioned with Jonson's Cataline in Sheppard's Epigrams, 1651, p. 98, but as inferior to the Albovine of Davenant!

† Trash was an old cant term for money. "Pelfe, trash, *id est*, mony."—Florio, ed. 1611, p. 63. The following passage contains the nearest approach to the difficult phrase *rump-fed* in Macbeth that I have yet met with, and would seem to give it an indelicate and reproachful meaning,—

> Of *rumpe-wood* widdowes, she's a patterne just,
> Though ner so old yet younge lads have they must,
> Who for the most part them doe thus rewarde,
> Getting their gold, they quickly them discarde.

assigns to its composition; but there is no reason to suppose that the part in which the above passage occurs was written after the year 1600. There are several imitations of Shakespeare to be traced in this curious poem; the following was probably suggested by a similar enumeration of antipathies in the Merchant of Venice:

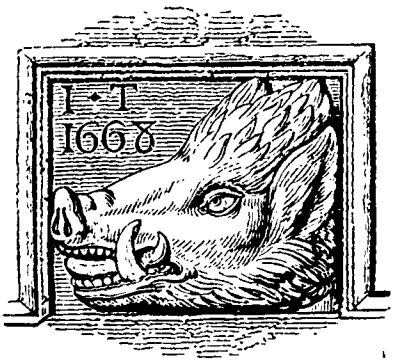
> I knewe the like by one that nould endure
> To see a goose come to the table sure;
> Some cannot brooke to se a custarde there,
> Some of a cheese doe ever stande in feare;
> And I knowe one, if she tobacco see,
> Or smels the same, she swoones imediately:
> The like of roses I have heard some tell,
> Touch but the skyn and presently 'twill swell,
> And growe to blisters; the reason it is this,
> Twixt them and these there's such antithisis.

I have not succeeded in discovering the author of this work, but this is not a matter worth much inquiry, for it has no poetical merit. He was well acquainted with the writers of the time, many of whom he mentions: kynde Kit Marloe, noble Sidney, and several others. "Green's Galiard" he also alludes to, and the references to obscure persons and events of the time are highly entertaining and curious. This is not the proper place to exhibit them, but one probable allusion to Shakespeare must not be omitted,—

> Who hath a lovinge wife and loves her not,
> He is no better then a witlesse sotte;
> Let such have wives to recompence their merite,
> Even Menelaus forked face inherite.
> Is love in wives good, not in husbands too?
> Why doe men sweare they love then when they wooe?
> It seemes tis true that W. S. said,
> When once he heard one courting of a mayde —
> Beleeve not thou mens fayned flatteryes,
> Lovers will tell a bushell-full of lyes!

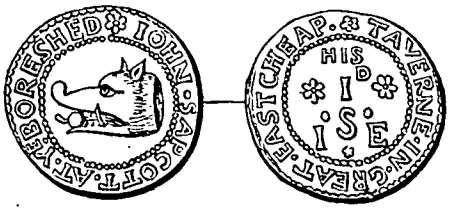
Although Meres does not particularize the two parts of Henry IV., there can be little doubt they had both been

produced before 1598, and much of Shakespeare's reputation with his contemporaries probably rested on the inimitable scenes in which are pictured the irregular adventures of Falstaff and the Prince. Mr. Hunter appears to think the circumstance of some of these scenes being laid at the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap was occasioned by a desire to particularize a favorite inn celebrated in Shakespeare's own days, the keeper of which "would doubtless find his account, as other persons have since done, in having his house



advertised at the theatres." This reads like antiquated conjecture, and the subject is hardly worth discussion, but Shakespeare has so popularized this tavern that a few words on its history will scarcely be considered out of place. It is found first mentioned as an inn in 1537, "all that tavern called the Bores Hedde," and frequent notices of it occur in Elizabethan writers. It was destroyed by the fire of London, but after that catastrophe a new tavern was raised on the old site, and a carved bas-relief in stone, represented above, placed over the gate. This second building remained till the alterations for the erection of the new London bridge required its removal. Soon after the Restoration a person of the name of John Sapcott was the successor of

Mistress Quickly, and issued penny tokens, one of which, still preserved in the cabinet of a collector, is here engraved.



It should be observed that the Boar's Head was formerly a common sign in London, and an unpublished document in the Chapter-house* mentions a theatre so called, a curious

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* "James, by the grace of God, Kynge of England, Scotland, Fraunce, and Irelande, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all Justices *of peace*, Maiors, Sherefes, Vicechancellours *of any our unyversities*, *bailiffes*, headboroughes, *constables*, *and to all other our offycers*, *mynisters*, and lovinge subjectes, *to whome it may appertaine*, greeting, Knowe yee that wee, of our speciall grace, certaine knowledge, and mere motion, have lycensed and authorised, and by these presentes doe lycence and authorise Thomas Greene, Christopher Beeston, Thomas Hawood, Richard Pyrkins, Robert Pallant, John Duke, Thomas Swynerton, James Holt, Robert Beeston, and Robert Lee, servauntes unto our dearest wyfe *the* Queene Anna, with the rest of there associates, freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playinge comedies, tragedies, historics, enterludes, morralls, pastoralls, stage plaies, and such other lyke as they have already studied, or hereafter shall use or study, as well for the recreacion of our lovinge subjectes, as for our solace and pleasure, when wee shall thinke good to see them duringe our pleasure; And the said comedies, tragedies, historics, enterludes, morralls, pastoralls, stage playes, and suche like, to shew and exercise publikly, when the infecion of the plague shall decrease to the nomber of thirty weekly within *our Citie of* London and the liberties *therof*, aswell within there now usuall howsen called the Curtayne and the Bores head, within our County of Midd. *as in* any other play-house not used by others, by the said *Thomas* Greene erected, or by hym hereafter to be builte, And also within any towne-halls or mouthalls, or other conveinyent places, within the liberties and freedomes of any cittie, universitie, towne, or boroughe whatsoever within our said realmes and domynyons. Willing and commaundinge you and everie of you, as you tender our pleasure, not only to permytt and suffer them *to use and exercise the said art of playing* without any your lettes, hinderaunces, or molestacions, duringe our said pleasure, but also to be aydinge and assistinge unto them, yf any wronge be to them offered; And to allow them such former curtesies, as hath *heretofore* bene gyven unto any men of theire qualitie: And also what further favour any of our subjectes shall shew to these our deare and loveinge wyfes servauntes, for our sake, wee shall take kyndly at your handes."

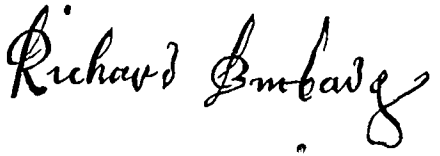
In the original document, this last paragraph is scratched through, as intended to be cancelled. The whole is without date, and is only a rough draft. There are several interlineations in the MS., which are here indicated by italics.

fact, hitherto unnoticed by all writers on the history of the stage. Among the records in the muniment room at Warwick Castle is an early lease relating to a tenement in the metropolis called the Boar's Head, situated not far from the Globe Theatre.

It is not my intention here to enter into any lengthened discussion on the subject that has occasioned this digression —the chronology of Shakespeare's plays; but I venture to hazard a remark, that it may hereafter be discovered that Shakespeare's energies required in some measure the impulse of necessity to develop them in their full extent; and that, after his fortune was made, acting and writing became secondary objects. Before Shakespeare had attained the age of forty, he had completed every purchase of great importance he ever made, and the best evidence we can produce exhibits him as paying more regard to his social affairs than to his profession. It is not impossible that even at this late period the lost accounts of the Lord Chamberlains may be recovered, and these would probably ascertain the exact order in which his plays were written, and how many of them he produced in the earlier period of the career. The uncertainty of reasoning on internal evidence in such matters has been eminently shown by recent discoveries, and the judgments of critics are so varied on this subject, that it would be a difficult task to reconcile their discordant conclusions. Perhaps Mr. Collier's opinions may claim the preference, but even they must be adopted with some hesitation, and I frequently have found occasion to dissent from the results he has arrived at. Without occupying these pages with my own conjectures, I may be allowed to mention that Cymbeline, which Mr. Collier thinks was not written before 1609, seems to be alluded to in the 'Returne from Pernassus,' 1606,—

Or make some sire acknowledge his lost son,
Found when the weary act is almost done.

We learn from several allusions in early works that Shakespeare's plays met with great success,* and were by no means so neglected by the public of his own time as some writers would appear to believe. Yet this success does great credit to the popular taste of that age, for some of his dramas are better fitted for the closet than for representation, and it is scarcely possible all his writings could have been thoroughly appreciated by those before whom they first appeared. It is, however, not improbable that the direction of public favour received an impulse from the



excellent acting of Burbage, one of the greatest artistes this country has ever produced. Shakespeare may have had him in view when he was writing some of his plays, and to the size of Burbage must be attributed the description of Hamlet, "he's fat and scant of breath," so discordant to all poetical taste. Mr. Collier has printed a poem, in which a description of Burbage's personal appearance is given nearly in the same words; and in confirmation of this opinion it may be observed how very seldom we are enabled to realize the persons of any of Shakespeare's creations, except in the case of Falstaff and some of his comic characters. It is well remarked by Sir Edward Bulwer, comparing

* Shakespeare, most rich in humours, entertain
The crouded theatres with his happy vein.

Small Poems, by Sir Aston Cokain, 1658, p. 108.

Shakespeare and Scott, two writers of quite dissimilar power, the latter chiefly eminent in description, "few of us can picture to ourselves the exterior of his great creations, while we intimately know their hearts; but who of us cannot image forth the swart Templar and the stately Leicester?"

Burbage and Shakespeare were intimate friends, and he is remembered with Heminges and Condell in the poet's

will. Manningham, in his Diary, MS. Harl. 5353, mentions an anecdote respecting them on the authority of Tooley, who was, according to Mr. Collier, Burbage's apprentice. Manningham heard this story in March, 1602, and it is thus noticed in his book,—"March 13, 1601; Upon a tyme, when Burbidge played Rich. 3, there was a citizen greue soe farr in liking with him, that before shee went from the play, shee appointed him to come that night unto hir by the name of Ri. the 3. Shakespeare, overhearing their conclusion, went before, was intertained, and at his game ere Burbidge came. Then, message being brought that Rich. the 3d. was at the dore, Shakespeare caused returne to be made that William the Conquerour was before Rich. the 3. Shakespeares name Willm.—Mr. Tooly(?)." If this anecdote be false, it was at all events current in London in 1602, and is a singularly curious discovery, for which we are indebted to Mr. Collier. It is worthy of remark that tradition carried the same tale with great fidelity up to the close of the last century.* In the same MS. diary Mr. Collier also

* Richard Burbadge was a contemporary and most celebrated brother actor of Shakespeare. "Richard" was his greatest part. One evening that he was

discovered the following curious and valuable notice of the performance of Twelfth Night in 1602, at the Middle Temple: "1601, Febr. 2. At our feast, wee had a play called Twelve Night, or What you Will, much like the Commedy of Errors, or Menechmi in Plautus, but most like and neere to that in Italian called Inganni. A good practise in it to make the steward beleeve his lady widdowe was in love with him, by counterfayting a lettre as from his lady in generall termes, telling him what shee liked best in him, and prescribing his gesture in smiling, his apparraile, &c., and then when he came to practise, making him beleeve they tooke him to be mad, &c." Before this curious memorandum was discovered, 1607 was the year usually assigned by the critics as the date of the composition of this play.

The same year in which Othello was performed at Hatfield discovers Shakespeare adding most extensively to his Stratford property. In May, 1602, he purchased a hundred and seven acres of arable land in the parish of Old Stratford, from William and John Combe. The original indenture, dated May 1st, is in the possession of Mr. Wheler. Shakespeare was not at Stratford when the conveyance was executed, and the counterpart of the indenture, also in Mr. Wheler's possession, does not contain his signature; but it

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to represent this character, and while behind the scenes, Shakespeare overheard him making an assignation with a lady of considerable beauty. Burbadge was to knock at her chamber door; she was to say "who comes there?" and on receiving for answer, "'Tis I, Richard the Third," the favourite tragedian was to be admitted. Shakespeare instantly determined to keep the appointment himself; and while Burbadge was giving due effect to the tyranny of Richard on the stage, Shakespeare hurried to the lady's house. Tapping at her door, he made the expected response to her interrogatory, and gained admittance. The poet's eloquence soon converted the fair one's anger into satisfaction; but quickly Burbadge was heard rapping at the door, and to the expected query replied, "'Tis I, Richard the Third." "Then," quoth Shakespeare, "go thy ways, knave, for thou knowest that William the Conqueror reigned before Richard the Third."—*Saunders, MS.*

appears from a memorandum that the business was transacted for the poet by his brother Gilbert.*

This Indenture, made the ffirste daie of Maye, in the ffowre and ffortieth yeare of the raigne of our Soveraigne Ladie Elizabeth, by the grace of God, of England, ffraunce, and Ireland, Queene, Defendresse of the faithe, &c. Betweene William Combe, of Warrwicke, in the countie of Warrwick, esquier, and John Combe, of Olde Stretford, in the countie aforesaid, gentleman, on the one partie, and William Shakespere, of Stretford-uppon-Avon, in the countie aforesaide, gentleman, on thother partie; Witnesseth, that the saide William Combe, and John Combe, for and in consideracion of the somme of three hundred and twentie poundes of currant Englishe money, to them in hande, at and before thensealinge and deliverie of theis presentes, well and trulie satisfied, contented, and paide; wherof and wherwith they acknowledge themselves fullye satisfied, contented, and paide, and therof, and of everie parte and parcell therof, doe clearlie exonerate, acquite, and discharge the saide William Shakspere, his heires, executors, administrators and assignes for ever; by theis presentes, have aliened, bargayned, solde, geven, graunted and confirmed, and by theis presentes, doe fullie, clearlie, and absolutelie alien, bargayne, sell, give, graunte, and confirme unto the saide William Shakespere, all and singuler those errable landes, with thappurtenaunces, conteyninge by estimacion ffowre yarde lande of errable lande, scytuate, lyinge or beinge within the parrishe, feilds, or towne of Olde Stretford aforesaid, in the saide countie of Warrwick, conteyninge by estimacion one hundred and seaven acres, be they more or lesse; and also all the comon of pasture for sheepe, horse, kyne, or other cattle, in the feildes of Olde Stretforde aforesaid, to the saide ffowre yarde lande belonginge, or in any wise apperteyninge; And also all hades, leys, tyinges, proffites, advantages, and commodities whatsoever, with their and everie of their appurtenaunces to the saide bargayned premisses belonginge or apperteyninge, or hertofore reputed, taken, knowne, or occupied as parte, parcell, or member of the same, and the revercion and the revercions of all and singuler the same bargayned premisses, and of everie parte and parcell therof, nowe or late in the severall tenures or occupacions of Thomas Hiccox, and Lewes Hiccox, or of either of them, or of their assignes, or any of them: together also with all charters, deedes, writinges, escriptes, and mynumentes whatsoever, touchinge or concerninge the same premisses onlye, or onlye any parte or parcell therof: and also the true copies of all other deedes, evidences, charters, writinges, escriptes, and mynumentes, which doe touche and concerne the

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* Sealed and delivered to Gilbert Shakespere to the use of the within named William Shakespere in the presence of

Anthony Nasshe. Jhon Nashe.
William Sheldon.
Humfrey Maynwaringe.
Rychard Mason.

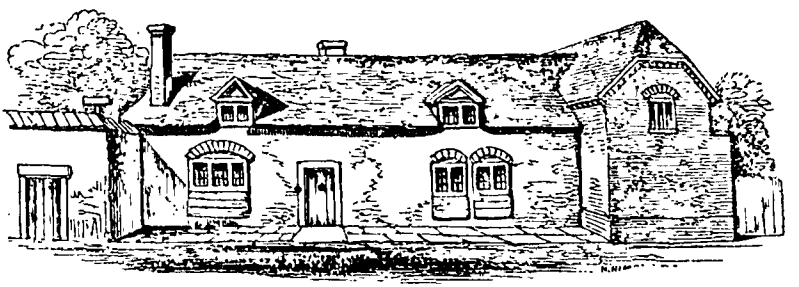
saide premisses before bargayned and solde, or any parte or parcell therof, which the saide William Combe, or John Combe, nowe have in their custodie, or hereafter may have, or which they may lawfully gett, or come by, without suite in lawe. To have and to holde the saide ffowre yarde of errable lande, conteyning by estimacion one hundred and seaven acres, be it more or lesse, and all and singuler other the premisses before by theis presentes aliened and solde, or mencioned, or entended to be aliened and solde, and everie parte and parcell therof; and all deedes, charters, writinges, escriptes, and mynumentes, before by theis presentes bargayned and solde unto the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes for ever, to the onlye proper use and behoofe of the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes, for ever. And the saide William Combe, and John Combe, for them, their heires, executors, and administrators, doe covenant, promise, and graunte to and with the saide William Shakespere, his heires, executors, and assignes, by theis presentes, that they, the saide William and John Combe, are seazed, or one of them is seazed, of a good, sure, perfect, and absolute estate, in fee simple, of the same premisses, before by theis presentes bargayned and solde, or ment, or mencioned to be bargayned and solde, without any further condicion, or lymyttacion of use, or estate, uses, or estates: and that he, the saide John Combe, his heires and assignes, shall and will, from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes herafter, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmles, and indempnified, as well the saide ffowre yardes of errable lande, conteyninge one hundred and seaven acres, and all other the premisses, with their appurtenaunces, before bargayned and solde, or mencioned or entended to be bargayned and solde, and every parte and parcell therof, as also the saide William Shakespere, and his heires and assignes, and everie of them, of and from all former bargaynes, sales, leases, joyntures, dowers, wills, statutes, recognizances, writinges obligatory, ffynes, feoffamentes, entayles, judgmentes, execucions, charges, titles, forfeytures, and encombrances whatsoever, at any tyme before thensealinge herof, had, made, knowledged, done, or suffred by the saide John Combe, or by the saide William Combe, or either of them, or by any other person or persons whatsoever, any thinge lawfully clayminge or havinge, from, by, or under them, or either of them; (the rentes and services herafter to be due, in respect of the premisses before mencioned or entended to be bargayned and solde to the cheife lorde or lordes of the fee or fees only excepted and foreprized.) And the saide William Combe, and John Coombe, for them, their heires, executors, administrators and assignes, doe covenant, promise, and graunte to and with the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes, by theis presentes, that they, the saide William and John Combe, or one of them, hathe rightfull power and lawfull auctheritie for any acte or actes done by them, the saide William and John Combe, or by the sufferance or procurement of them, the saide William and John Combe, to geve, graunte, bargayne, sell, convey, and assure the saide ffowre yardes of errable lande, conteyninge one hundred and seaven acres, and all other the premisses before by theis presentes bargayned and solde, or mente or mencioned to be bargayned and solde, and everie parte and parcell therof, to the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes, in suche manner

and forme, as in and by theis presentes is lymytted, expressed, and declared: And that they, the saide William and John Combe, and their heires, and also all and everie other person, and persons, and their heires, nowe, or herafter havinge or clayminge any lawfull estate, righte, title, or interest, of, in, or to the saide errable lande, and all other the premisses before by theis presentes bargayned and solde, with their and everie of their appurtenaunces (other then the cheife lorde or lordes of the fee or fees of the premisses, for their rentes and services onlie) at all times herafter, duringe the space of ffyve yeares next ensewinge the date herof, shall doe, cause, knowledge, and suffer to be done and knowledged, all and everie suche further lawfull and reasonable acte and actes, thinge and thinges, devise and devises, assurances and conveyances whatsoever, for the further, more better, and perfect assurance, suretye, sure makinge and conveyinge of all the saide premisses before bargayned and solde, or mencioned to be bargayned and solde, with their appurtenaunces, and everie parte and parcell therof, to the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes, for ever, accordinge to the true entent and meaninge of theis presentes, as by the saide William Shakespere, his heires or assignes, or his or their learned counsell in the lawe, shal be reasonablie devized, or advized, and required, be yt by fyne or fynes, with proclamacion, recoverie with voucher or vouchers over, deede or deedes enrolled, enrollment of theis presentes, feoffament, releaze, confirmacion, or otherwise; with warrantie against the saide William Combe, and John Combe, their heires and assignes, and all other persons clayminge by, from, or under them, or any of them, or without warrantie, at the costes and charges in the lawe of the saide William Shakespere, his heires, executors, administrators, or assignes, so as for the makinge of any suche estate, or assurance, the saide William and John Combe be not compell'd to travaile above sixe myles. And the saide William Combe, and John Combe, for them, their heires, executors, administrators, and assignes, doe covenant, promise, and graunte to and with the saide William Shakespere, his heires, executors, administrators, and assignes, by theis presentes, that the saide William Shakespere, his heires and assignes, shall or may, from tyme to tyme, from henceforth for ever, peaceably and quietlie have, holde, occupie, possesse, and enjoye the saide ffowre yardes of errable lande, and all other the bargayned premisses, with their appurtenaunces, and everie parte and parcell therof, without any manner of lett, trouble, or eviccion of them, the saide William Combe, and John Combe, their heires, or assignes; and without the lawfull lett, trouble or eviccion, of any other person or persons whatsoever, lawfully havinge, or clayminge any thinge in, of, or out of the saide premisses, or any parte therof, by, from, or under them, the saide William Combe, and John Combe, or either of them, or the heires or assignes of them, or either of them, or their, or any of their estate, title, or interest. In wytnes wherof, the parties to theis presentes have enterchangeably set to their handes and seales, the daie and yeare firste above written. 1602.

W. Combe. Jo. Combe.

On September 28th, 1602, at a court baron of the manor of Rowington, Walter Getley surrendered to Shakespeare a

house in Dead Lane, Stratford, near New Place. Its exact position will be seen in the plan at p. 165, where it is marked G, the street being now called Chapel Lane. It appears from the Court Roll that Shakespeare was not at Stratford at the time of the surrender, there being a proviso that the property should remain in the possession of the lady of the manor till the purchaser had done suit and service in the court. Getley's cottage was in existence a few years ago, but a modern building has now usurped its place. The property is still held under the manor* of Rowington, and is now in the possession of W. O. Hunt, Esq.



House sold by Getley to Shakespeare, 1602.

Rowington. Vis. franc. pleg. cum cur. baron. prænobilis dominæ Annæ comitissæ Warwici ibidem tent. xxviijo. die Septembris, anno regni dominæ nostræ Elizabethæ, Dei gracia Angliæ, Franciæ et Hiberniæ reginæ, fidei defensor. &c. quadragesimo quarto, coram Henr. Michell generoso deputat. scenescall. Johannis Huggeford ar. capitalis scenescalli ibidem.

Ad hanc curiam venit Walterus Getley per Thomam Tibbottes jun. attorn. suum, unum customar. tenent. manerii prædicti (præd. Thoma Tibbottes jur. pro veritate inde), et sursumredd. in manus dominæ manerii prædicti unum cotagium cum pertinent. scit. jacen. et existen. in Stratford super Avon, in quodam vico ibidem vocato *Walkers Streete* alias *Dead Lane*, ad opus et usum

* Rowington Manor.—"By the custome thereof, the eldest sonne is to inherite, and for default of yssue male, the eldest daughter. The coppicholders for every messuage and for every tofft of a messuage paye a herriott, but a cottage and tofft of a cottage paye not herriotts."—*Survey, MS. at Carlton Ryde.*

Willielmi Shackespere et hæred. suorum in perpetuum, secundum consuetudinem manerii prædicti; et sic remanet in manibus dominæ manerii prædicti, quousque prædictus Willielmus Shakespare ven. ad capiend. præmissa prædicta. In cujus rei testimonium, prædictus Henricus Michell huic præsenti copiæ sigillum suum apposuit die et anno supradictis.

Per me HENR. MICHELL.

This property is mentioned in a survey* of the manor of Rowington, dated 1 Aug. 4 Jac. I. 1606, preserved in the Auditors' Land Revenue Office; and from the circumstance of Shakespeare not having appeared, and the particulars not being furnished, we may safely conclude he was not at Stratford at that period.

Tenen. Custum.

Stratford super Avon.	Willielmus Shakespere tenet per cop. dat. die . . . . . Anno	
	viz.	
	Dom. manss.	ij.s.
		fin.
	Redd. per annum	her.
	Habend.	Ann. val.
		dimitt.

In the same year in which he made the purchases last mentioned, Shakespeare also bought a property from Hercules Underhill, described as consisting of one messuage, two barns, two gardens, and two orchards, for the sum of sixty pounds. The fine levied on this occasion was first published by Mr. Collier, but he has wrongly dated it 1603, and the same error has been committed by subsequent

* Several persons of the name of Shakespeare are mentioned in this survey. Among the jurymen were Thomas Shackspeare sen., Ricardus Shackspeare, sen., and Thomas Chaxspere, the two first being marksmen, the latter signing his name with the curious orthography here indicated.

writers. The following is taken from the foot of the fine preserved in the Chapter House:

Inter Willielmum Shakespeare generosum quer. et Herculem Underhill generosum deforc. de uno mesuagio, duobus horreis, duobus gardinis, et duobus pomariis, cum pertinentiis, in Stretford super Avon; unde placitum convencionis sum. fuit inter eos &c. scilicet quod prædictus Hercules recogn. prædicta ten. cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius Willielmi, ut ill. quæ idem Willielmus habet de dono prædicti Herculis, et ill. remisit et quieteclam. de se et hæred. suis prædicto Willielmo et hæred. suis in perpetuum. Et præterea* idem Hercules concessit pro se et hæred. suis quod ipsi warant. prædicto Willielmo et hæred. suis prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis contra prædictum Herculem et hæred. suos in perpetuum; Et pro hac recogn. remis. quietclam. &c. idem Willielmus dedit prædicto Herculi sexaginta libras sterlingorum. [Mich. 44 & 45 Eliz.]

It has already been observed that Shakespeare enjoyed the patronage of Elizabeth and her successor, and this seems the proper place for introducing the warrant for a patent, authorising the performances of the company to which Shakespeare belonged, which was granted by James soon after his arrival in England. The Lord Chamberlain's players were taken into the king's service, and they were afterwards called the King's Players. The warrant alluded to bears date May 7th, 1603, and is preserved at the Chapter House, Privy Seal Papers, no. 71.

By the King. Right trusty and welbeloved counsellor, we greete you well, and will and commaund you, that under our privie seale in your custody for the time being, you cause our letters to be derected to the keeper of our greate seale of England, commaunding him under our said greate seale, he cause our letters to be made patents in forme following. James, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, Fraunce and Irland, defendor of the faith, &c., to all justices, maiors, sheriffs, constables, headboroughes, and other our officers and loving subjects, greeting; Know ye, that we of our speciall grace, certaine knowledge, and meere motion, have licenced and authorized, and by these presentes doe licence and authorize, these our servants, Lawrence Fletcher, William Shakespeare, Richard Burbage, Augustine Phillippes, John Hemmings, Henrie Condell, William Sly, Robert Armyn, Richard Cowlye, and the rest of their associats, freely to use and exercise the arte and faculty of playing

* Mr. Collier reads *prædicta*, which is clearly erroneous.

comedies, tragedies, histories, enterludes, moralls, pastoralls, stage plaies, and such other like, as thei have already studied, or hereafter shall use or studie, as well for the recreation of our loving subjects, as for our solace and pleasure, when we shall thinke good to see them, during our pleasure; and the said comedies, tragedies, histories, enterludes, moralls, pastoralls, stage plaies, and such like, to shew and exercise publiquely to their best commoditie, when the infection of the plague shall decrease, as well within theire now usuall howse called the Globe, within our county of Surrey, as also within anie towne halls, or mout-halls, or other convenient places within the liberties and freedome of any other citie, universitie, towne or borough whatsoever within our said realmes and dominions. Willing and commaunding you, and every of you, as you tender our pleasure, not only to permit and suffer them heerin, without any your letts, hinderances, or molestations, during our said pleasure, but also to be ayding or assisting to them yf any wrong be to them offered; and to allowe them such former courtesies, as hathe bene given to men of their place and qualitie, and also what further favour you shall shew to these our servants for our sake we shall take kindly at your hands, and these our letters shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge in this behalfe. Given under our signet at our mannor of Greenewiche the seavententh day of May in the first yeere of our raigne of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland the six and thirtieth.

We here find Shakespeare's name second in the list of the company, and there can be no doubt of his having been at that time one of the principal sharers in the Globe and Blackfriar's theatres. A letter from Daniel to Sir Thomas Egerton, found by Mr. Collier in Lord Ellesmere's collection of manuscripts, written about this period, for Daniel's appointment was made early in 1604, alludes to Shakespeare as having attempted to procure the office of Master of the Queen's Revels, or overlooker of the plays performed by the Children of the Revels.. Shakespeare is not mentioned by name, but the description is sufficiently minute to enable us to conclude with tolerable certainty that he is alluded to, for it could apply to no other member of the company. The letter is printed in Mr. Collier's New Facts, 1835, p. 48, but the following passage is the only portion of it relating to this subject:

But a little time is past since I was called upon to thanke your honor for my brothers advancement, and now I thanke you for myne owne; which double

kindnes will alwaies receive double gratefulnes at both our handes. I cannot but knowe that I am lesse deserving then some that sued by other of the nobility unto her Majestie for this roome: if M. Draiton, my good friend, had benc chosen, I should not have murmured, for sure I ame he wold have filled it most excellentlie; but it seemeth to myne humble judgement that one who is the authour of playes now daylie presented on the public stages of London, and the possessor of no small gaines, and moreover himselfe an actor in the King's Companie of comedians, could not with reason pretend to be Mr. of the Queenes Majesties Revells, for as much as he wold sometimes be asked to approve and allow of his owne writings. Therefore he, and more of like quality, cannot justlie be disappointed, because, through your Honors gracious interposition, the chance was haply myne.

The reason here given by Daniel for Shakespeare's unfitness for the office shows that he was writing for the stage, and the curious accounts discovered by Mr. Cunningham in the Audit Office exhibit the popularity of Shakespeare's plays about this period.* These accounts were printed by Mr. Cunningham in his 'Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court,' 1842, but they are of so much curiosity and importance, that I here give a copy of those entries which relate to Shakespeare's plays.

The Plaiers.	1605.	*The poets which mayd the plaies.*
By the Kings Matie plaiers.	Hallamas Day being the first of Novembar, A play in the Banketinge House att Whithall called the Moor of Venis. [Nov. 1st, 1604.]	
By his Matie plaiers.	The Sunday ffollowinge, a play of the Merry Wives of Winsor. [Nov. 4th, 1604.]	
By his Matie plaiers.	On St. Stivens night in the hall a play caled Mesur for Mesur. [Dec. 26th, 1604.]	Shaxberd.
By his Matie plaiers.	On Inosents Night the Plaie of Errors. [Dec. 28th, 1604.]	Shaxberd
By his Matie plaiers.	Betwin Newers day and Twelfe day a play of Loves Labours Lost. [1605.]	
By his Matie plaiers.	On the 7 of January was played the play of Henry the fift. [1605.]	

* "A probable computation of the thousands of people of both sexes whom Shakespeare's plays have maintained to this day would appear incredible to any one who did not maturely consider it."—*Oldys MS.*

The Plaiers.	e 1605.	*The poets which mayd the plaies.*
By his Ma^{tis} plaiers.	On Shrovsunday a play of the Marchant of Venis. [Mar. 24th, 1605.]	Shaxberd.
By his Ma^{tis} players.	On Shrovtusday a play cauled the Martchant of Venis againe commanded by the Kings Matie. [26 Mar. 1605.]	Shaxberd.
	[Accounts from Oct. 31st, 1611, to Nov. 1st, 1612.]	
By the Kings players.	Hallomas nyght was presented att Whithall before the Kinges Matie a play called the Tempest. [Nov. 1st, 1611.]	
The Kings players.	The 5th of November: A play called the Winters Nightes Tayle. [1611.]	

From these notices it appears that the Merchant of Vehice pleased James sufficiently to call from that monarch a special command for its representation only two days after it had been performed on March 24th, 1605. This circumstance almost extinguishes a conjecture I should otherwise have mentioned with more confidence, that Shakespeare may have represented the sovereign in the play of the Gowry Conspiracy, which occasioned great displeasure at court in 1604,* and that to such a circumstance the remarkable lines quoted from Davies (at p. 149) refer. The verses of Davies may, however, possibly allude to a later circumstance, for, in 1606, James was again brought on the stage by the players, who "made him curse and swear because he had been robbed of a bird, and beat a gentleman, because he had called off the hounds from the scent; they represent him as drunk at least once a day;" but

* "The tragedy of Gowry, with all action and actors, hath been twice represented by the king's players with exceeding concourse of all sorts of people; but whether the matter or manner be not well handled, or that it be thought unfit that princes should be played on the stage in their lifetime, I hear that some great counsellors are much displeased with it, and so it is thought it shall be forbidden."—*Letter, dated Dec. 18th,* 1604, *Collier's Annals of the Stage,* i. 358.

although Shakespeare may have aided in an historical play on the former subject, yet it is unlikely he would have been so imprudent as to indulge in a burlesque of so broad a character as the second narrative implies, and I am not sure that this latter relates to the king's players. Mr. Collier, who furnishes this information, also prints some verses entitled 'Shakespeare on the King' from a manuscript in his possession. These lines are contained in several early collections generally attributed to Shakespeare, and Mr. Collier unhesitatingly assigns them to the poet; but I much doubt whether the compliment is sufficiently elegant to be classed with his other essays of the same kind.*

> Crowns have their compass, length of days their date,
> Triumphs their tomb, felicity her fate:
> Of nought but earth can earth make us partaker,
> But knowledge makes a king most like his Maker.

It should be recollected that the manuscript miscellanies of Shakespeare's time, although generally very good authorities for biographical information, cannot always be depended upon for accuracy in the names of authors to whom short poems are assigned. One of these contains the poem beginning "From the rich Lavinian shore," entitled 'Shakespeare's rime which he made at the Mytre in Fleete Streete;' and in the same MS. one of Ben Jonson's epigrams is slightly altered and attributed to Shakespeare. We must be cautious in adding to the works of Shakespeare from such sources;† for these being erroneously attributed to his pen merely

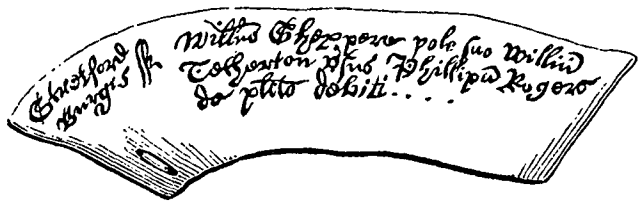
* Since writing the above I have met with a confirmation of this opinion, for a copy of these lines in a MS. in the Ashmolean Museum, No. 38, is entitled "Certayne verses wrighten by Mr. Robert Barker, his Majestis printer, under his Majestis picture."

† A curious volume of short poems, attributed to Shakespeare, printed about 1660, is preserved in the Bodleian Library. It is entitled 'Cupids Cabinet Unlock't, or the New Accademy of Complements, Odes, Epigrams, Songs, and Sonnets, Poesies, Presentations, Congratulations, Ejaculations, Rhapsodies, &c., with other various fancies. Created partly for the delight, but chiefly for the use of all Ladies, Gentlemen, and Strangers, who affect to speak Elegantly, or write Quaintly. By W. Shakespeare.'

prove his popularity, and are not any evidences in favour of his having had a share in their composition. This practice was not solely confined to manuscript literature, for we learn from Heywood that Shakespeare was "much offended" with Jaggard for publishing pieces under his name which he had not written; and, although very unwilling to hazard an opinion against the genuineness of a poem that has invariably been ascribed to Shakespeare without hesitation, I confess it would be more satisfactory were some other evidence to be produced of the authenticity of the singular lines published in Chester's 'Love's Martyr,' 1601, commencing

> Let the bird of loudest lay,
> On the sole Arabian tree,
> Herald sad and trumpet be,
> To whose sound chaste wings obey.

Returning to the consideration of Shakespeare's personal history, and calling the reader's attention to the purchases made by him at Stratford in 1602, the following document will be found to be highly interesting, exhibiting the poet engaged in commercial transactions in his native town. Mr. Knight conjectures that he farmed the land he purchased of the Combes. In 1604 he brought an action against Phillip Rogers for £1 15*s.* 10*d.*, for malt sold and delivered to him at several times. The declaration was filed in the Stratford Court of Record, and is one of the most curious documents connected with Shakespeare's personal history known to exist. It has never yet been printed.



Phillipus Rogers summonitus fuit per servient. ad clavem ibidem ad respond. Willielmo Shexpere de placito quod reddat ei triginta et quinque solid. decem denar. quos ei debet et injuste detinet, et sunt pleg. de prosequend. Johannes

Doe et Ricardus Roe, &c. et unde idem Willelmus, per Willielmum Tetherton attorn. suum, dicit quod cum prædictus Phillippus Rogers vicesimo septimo die Marcii, anno regni domini Jacobi regis, nunc Angliæ, Franc. et Hiberniæ, primo, et Scociæ tricesimo septimo, hic apud Stretford præd. et infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ emisset de eodem Willielmo tres modios brasii pro sex solid. de præd. triginti et quinque solid. decem denar., ac etiam quod cum præd. Phillipus Rogers, decimo die Aprillis, anno regni dicti domini regis nunc Angliæ &c. secundo, hic apud Stretford præd. ac infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ, emisset de eodem Willielmo quatuor modios brasii pro octo solid. de præd. 35 solid. 10 denar., ac etiam quod cum præd. Phillipus 24° die dicti Aprilis, anno regni dicti domini regis nunc Angliæ &c. secundo, hic apud Stretford præd. infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ emisset de eodem Willielmo alios tres modios brasii pro sex solid. de præd. 35 solid. 10 denar., ac etiam quod cum præd. Phillipus, tercio die Maii, anno regni dicti domini regis nunc Angliæ &c. secundo, hic apud Stretford præd. infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ emisset de eodem Willielmo alios quatuor modios brasii pro octo solid. de præd. 35 solid. 10 denar., ac etiam quod cum præd. Phillipus, tricesimo die Maii, anno regni dicti domini regis nunc Angliæ &c. secundo, hic apud Stretford præd. ac infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ emisset de eodem Willielmo duos modios brasii pro tres solid. decem denar. de præd. 35 solid. 10 denar., ac etiam quod cum præd. Phillipus, vicesimo quinto die Junii, anno dicti domini regis nunc Angliæ &c., hic apud Stretford præd. ac infra jurisdictionem hujus curiæ, mutuatus fuisset duos solid. legalis monetæ &c. de præd. 35 solid. 10 denar. resid. solvend. eidem Willielmo, cum inde requisit. fuisset; quæ omnia seperal. somn. attingunt se in toto ad quadraginta et unum solid. decem denar. Et prædictus Phillipus Rogers de sex solid. inde eidem Willielmo postea satisfecisset, prædictus tamen Phillipus, licet sepius requisit., prædictos trigint. et quinque solid. decem denar. resid. eidem Willielmo nondum reddidit, sed illa ei huc usque reddere contradixit et adhuc contradic., unde quod deter. est et dampna habet ad valenc. decem solidorum. Et inde producit sectam &c.

In July, 1605, Shakespeare made the largest purchase he ever completed, giving the sum of £440 for the unexpired term of a moiety of a lease, granted in 1544 for ninety-two years, of the tithes of Stratford, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe. In the indenture of conveyance he is described as of Stratford upon Avon, gentleman; and, as he is similarly designated three years earlier, when we know that he was in London, we may conclude that after the purchase of New Place he had taken up his permanent abode in his native town. It appears from a letter, printed at p. 172, that as early as 1598 the subject of Shakespeare

becoming the purchaser of these tithes had been mooted at Stratford, and the management of them would probably require great prudential care. It is not impossible that confidence was entertained in Shakespeare's tact and judgment, and that this, as well as his command of capital, produced the desire of the Council of Stratford, who received a rent from these tithes, that he should become the purchaser.

This indenture made the [24th of July, 1605,] &c. Betweene Raphe Hubande of Ippesley in the countye of Warr. esquier on thone parte, and William Shakespeare of Stratford uppon Avon in the saied countie of Warr. gent. on thother parte, Whereas Anthonie Barker clarke, late Warden of the Colledge or Collegiate Churche of Stratford upon Avon in the saied countye of Warr. and Giles Coventrie subwarden there, and the whole chapter of the same late colledge, by their deade indented sealed with their chapter seale, Dated the seaventh daie of September in the sixe and thirtyth yeare of the raigne of the late kinge of famous memorie Kinge Henrye the viij.te. demised, graunted, and to farme lett (amongst diverse other things) unto one William Barker of Sonnynge in the countye of Bark. gent. all and all manner of tythes of corne, graine, blade and heye yearelie and from tyme to tyme comyng, encreasing, reneweing, arrysing, groweing, yssueing or happeninge, or to bee had, receyved, perceyved or taken out, upon or in the townes, villages, hamletts, grounds or ffyelds of Stratford, Old Stratford, Welcombe, and Buyshopton in the saied countye of Warr. and alsoe all and all manner of tythes of wooll, lambe, and other small and pryvie tythes, oblacions, obvencions, alterages, myniments and offerings whatsoever yearelie and from tyme to tyme cominge, encreasinge reneweing or groweing, or to bee had receyved perceyved or taken within the parishe of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in the saied countie of Warr. by the name or names of all and singuler their mannors, lands, tenements, meadowes, pastures, feedings, woods, underwoods, rents, revercions, services, courts, leets, releeves, wards, marriages, harriotts, perquisites of courts, liberties, jurisdictions, and all other hereditaments, with all and singuler other rights, commodities, and their appurtenaunces, together with all manner of parsonages, gleebe landes, tythes, alterages, oblacions, obvencions, myniments, offerings, and all other issues, proffits, emoluments and advantages in the countie of Warr. or Worcester, or elsewhere whatsoever they bee, unto the said colledge apperteyninge, (the mancion-house and the scite of the saied colledge, with their appurtenaunces within the precincts of the walls of the saied Colledge unto the saied warden and subwarden onlie excepted), To have and to holde all the saied mannors, landes, tenements, and all other the premisses with all and singuler their appurtenaunces (excepte before excepted) unto the saied College belonginge or in anie [wise] apperteyninge unto the said William Barker, his executors and assignes, from the ffeast of St. Michaell tharchangell then last paste before the date of the

saied indenture, unto thend and terme of ffourescore and twelve yeares then next ensueinge, yelding and paieng therefore yearelie unto the said warden and sub-warden and their successors att the saied colledge cxxij.*li.* xviij.*s.* ix.*d.* of lawfull money of England, as more playnelie appeareth by the saied indenture, And whereas also the revercion of all and singuler the saied premisses emonge other things by vertue of the acte of Parlyment made in the first yeare of the raigne of our late soveraigne lorde Kinge Edwarde the sixte for the dissolucion of chauntries, colledges, and ffree chappels, or by some other meanes, came to the hands and possession of the saied late Kinge Edwarde, and where also the saied late King Edward the sixte being seised, as in the right of his crowne of England, of and in the revercion of all and singuler the premisses, by his lettres patents bearing date the xxvijth daie of June in the vijth yeare of his raigne, for the consideracion therein expressed, did gyve and graunte unto the baylief and burgesses of Stratford aforesaied, and to their successors, emonge other things, all and all manner of the saied tythes of corne, graine and hay, cominge, encreasinge or arrysinge, in the villages and ffields of Old Stratford, Welcombe, and Bushopton, in the saied countie of Warwicke, then or late in the tenure of John Barker, and to the late Colledge of Stratford upon Avon in the saied countye of Warr. of late belonginge and apperteyninge, and parcell of the possession thereof beinge, and alsoe all and all manner the saied tythes of wooll, lambe, and other smalle and pryvie tythes, oblacions and alterages, whatsoever, within the parishe of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, and to the saied late Colledge of Stratford upon Avon belonging or apperteyninge, and then or late in the tenure of William Barker or of his assignes, and the revercion and revercions whatsoever of all and singuler the saied tythes, and everie parte and parcell thereof, and the rents, revenues, and other yearelie profitts whatsoever reserved upon anie demise or graunte of the saied tiethes or anie parte or parcell thereof; and whereas alsoe the interest of the said premisses in the said original lease mencioned, and the interest of certaine coppieholdes in Shotterie in the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, beinge by good and lawfull conveyance and assurance in the lawe before that tyme conveyed and assured to John Barker of Hurste in the said countie of Berks, he the said John Barker by his indenture bearinge date the ffowre and twenteth daye of June in the twoe and twenteth yeare of the raigne of the late Quene Elizabeth for the consideracions therein specified, Did give graunte assigne and sett over unto Sir John Huband Knighte deceassed, brother of the saied Raphe Huband of Ipsley in the said countie of Warwicke esquire, all and singuler the said last mencioned premisses, And all his estate right tytle and interest that he then had to come, of and in and to all and singler the said premisses, and of all other mannors, messuages, lands, tenements, glebe lands, tiethes, oblacions, commodities, and proffitts in the said originall lease mencioned, for and duringe all the yeares and terme then to come unexpired in the said originall lease, (exceptinge as in and by the saide laste mencioned indenture is excepted), as by the same indenture more at large maie appeare, To have and to holde all and singler the said recyted premisses (excepte before excepted) to the said Sir John Huband Knight, his executors and assignes, for and duringe the yeares then to come of and in the same, Yeldinge and payeing therfore yearly

after the ffeast of St. Michaell tharchangell next ensuing the date of the last mencioned indenture, for and duringe all the yeares mencioned in the said first mencioned indenture then to come and not expired, unto the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, assignes, one annuall or yearely rente of twenty seaven pounds thirteene shillinges ffowre pence by the yeare, to be yssuynge and goynge out of all the mannors, lands, tenements, tyethes and hereditaments, in the said indenture specified, to be paide yearly to the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assignes, by the said Sir John Huband, his executors, administrators, and assignes, att the ffeaste of the annunciacion of our Lady and St. Michaell tharcheangell, or within ffortie dayes after the said ffeasts, in the porche of the Parishe Churche of Stratford aforesaid by yeven porcions, And further prayinge, doynge, and performynge all such other rents, duties, and services, as at anie tyme from thenceforth, and from tyme to tyme, and duringe the terme aforesaide, shoulde become due to anie person or persons for the same premisses, or anie parte thereof, and thereof to discharge the said John Barker, his executors and administrators; And yff yt shoulde happen the said twentie-seaven pounds thirteene shillinges ffowre pence to be behinde and unpaide, in parte or in all, by the space of ffortie dayes nexte after anie of the said ffeasts or dayes of payments, in which, as is aforesaid, yt oughte to be paide, beinge lawfully asked, That then yt shoulde be lawfull to and for the said John Barker, his executors, administrators and assignes, into all and singuler the premisses, with their appurtenaunces and everie parte and parcell thereof, to reenter and the same to have againe, as in his or their former righte, and that then and from thenceforth the said recyted indenture of assignemente, and everie article, covenaunte, clause, provisoe and agreemente, therein conteyned on the parte and behalfe of the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assignes, to be performed, shoulde cease and be utterly voyde and of none effecte, with diverse other covenaunts, graunts, articles and agreements in the said indenture of assignemente specified to be observed and performed by the said Sir John Huband, his executors and assignes, as in and by the said recyted indenture it doth and maye appeare. And whereas the said Sir John Huband did, by his deede obligatorie, bynde himselfe and his heires to the said John Barker in a greate summe of monney for the performance of all and singler the covenaunts, graunts, articles and agreements, which on the parte of the said Sir John Huband were to be observed and performed, conteyned and specified as well in the said recyted indenture of assignement, as alsoe in one other indenture, beringe the date of the said recyted indenture of assignemente, made betwene the said John Barker on thone partie and the said Sir John Huband on thother partie, as by the saied deede obligatorie moore at large yt dothe and maie appeare. And whereas alsoe the saied Sir John Huband, by his laste will and testamente in writinge, did gyve and bequeath [unto his executors &c. amongste other things the moytie or one halfe of*] all and singuler the saied tythes,

* Instead of the passage between brackets the following is interlined: "unto the saied Raphe Huband, and unto George Digbye then esquier and after made knight.'

as well greate and smalle, before mencioned, to be graunted to the saied baylieffe and burgesses, and duringe soe long tyme, and untill the issues and profitts thereof, soe much as with other things in his saied will to that purpose willed, lymitted, or appointed, should be sufficient to dischardge, beare, and paie his funerall debts and legacies, and the other moytie or one halfe of the saied tythes did alsoe gyve and bequeath unto the saied Raphe Huband and his assignes, during all the yeares then to come in the saied originall lease and not expired, payeinge the one halfe of the rents and other charges dewe or goeing out of or for the same, that is to saie the one halfe of tenne pounds by yeare to be paied to the saied John Barker, over and above the rents thereof reserved upon the saied originall lease for the same, as by the saied will and testament more at large appeareth; This indenture nowe witnesseth that the saide Raphe Huband, for and in consideracion of the somme of ffoure hundred and ffourtie poundes of lawfull Englishe moncy to him by the saied William Shackesphere, before thensealinge and deliverye of these presentes, well and truelie contented and paied, whereof everye parte and parcell whereof he doth by these presentes acknowledge the receipt, and thereof and of everye parte and parcell thereof the saied Raphe Huband doth by thees presentes clerelie acquite exonerate and discharge the saied William Shackesphere, his heires, executors and administrators, for ever, Hath graunted, demised, assigned, and sett over, and by these presentes doth graunte, demise, assigne, and sett over unto the saied William Shackesphere, his executors and assignes, the saied moytie or one half of all the saied tythes of corne, graine, blade and heye, yearelie, and from tyme to tyme cominge, increasinge, reneweinge, arrysing, and groweinge, essueinge, or happininge or to be had, receyved, perceyved, or taken out, of, upon, or in the townes, villages, hamletts, grownds and ffyelds of Stratford, Old Stratford, Bushypton, and Welcombe, in the saied Countie of Warr. and alsoe the moytie or one half of all the tythes of wooll, lambe, and other smalle and pryvie tythes, herbage, oblacions, obvencions, alterages, mynuments, offerings, and proffits whatsoever, yearelie, and from tyme to tyme, cominge, encreasinge, reneweinge, or groweinge, or to bee had, receyved, perceyved, or taken, within the parishe of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid; and alsoe the moytie or one halfe of all and all manner of tythes, as well greate as smalle whatsoever, which were by the laste will and testamente of the said Sir John Huband gyven and bequeathed to the saied Raphe Huband, arrysing, encreasing, reneweing, or groweinge within the saied parishe of Stratford upon Avon, and whereof the saied Raphe Huband hath att anie tyme heretofore been possessed of, or whereof by vertue of the saied will and testament of righte ought to be possessed, or whereunto he nowe hath, or hereafter should have, anie estate, right, or interest, in possession or revercion, and all the estate, right, title, interest, claime, and demaunde whatsoever, of the saied Raphe Huband, of, in, and to all and singler the premisses hereby lastelie mencioned to be graunted and assigned, and everie or anie parte or parcell thereof, and the revercion and revercions of all and singuler the premisses, and all rentes and yearelie proffitts reserved upon anie demise, graunte, or assignemente thereof, or anie parte thereof heretofore made, (the pryvie tythes of Luddington and suche parte of the tythe of hey,

and pryvie tythes of Bushopton, as of righte doe belonge to the vicar, curate or minister there for the tyme beinge, alwaies excepted and foreprised), To have and to hold the saied moyties of all and singuler the saied tythes, before, in, and by these presentes lastelie mencioned to be graunted and assigned, and everie parte and parcell of them, and all the estate, right, title, and interest, of the saied Raphe Huband, of, in, and to the same, and all other the aforedemised premisses, and everie part thereof (except before excepted) unto the saied William Shakespear, his executors and assignes, from the daie of the date hereof, for and duringe the residewe of the saied terme of ffowrescore and twelve yeares in the saied first mencioned indenture expressed, and for suche and soe longe terme and tyme, and in as longe, ample, and beneficyall manner as the saied Raphe Huband should or ought enjoye the same, yeldinge and paieinge therefore yearelie duringe the residewe of the saied terme of ffourescore and twelve yeares which be yet to come and unexpired, the rents hereafter mencioned, in manner and forme followeinge, that is to saie, unto the baylieffe and burgesses of Stratford aforesaid, and their successors, the yearelie rent of seaventeene pounds, at the ffeasts of St. Michaell tharchangell and thannunciacion of blessed Maria the Virgin by equall porcions, and unto John Barker, his executors, administrators or assignes, the yearlie rent of ffyve pounds att ffeast daies and place in the recited indenture of assignemente lymitted and appointed, (or within fourtie dayes after the saied ffeasts due by even porcions) as parcell of the saied annuall rent of twenty seaven pounds, thirteene shillings, foure pence, in the saied assignement mencioned; And the saied Raphe Huband doth, by thees presentes, for him, his heires, executors, administrators, and assignes, covenaunte and graunte to and with the saied William Shakesphere, his executors, administrators, and assignes, and everye of them, that hee the saied Raphe Huband att the tyme of thensealinge of thees presentes hath, and att the tyme of the first execucion of anie estate interest or terme by force of thees presentes shall have, full power, lawfull and sufficient aucthoritie, certenlie, suerlie, and absolutelie, to graunte, demise, assigne, and sett over the saied moyties, or one half of all and singler the saied tythes, and other premisses before by thees presentes lastlie mencioned to be assigned and sett over, and everie parte and parcell thereof, unto the saied William Shakespliere, his executours and assignes, according to the true meaning of thees presentes; and alsoe that the said William Shakesphere, his executours, administratours, or assignes, shall and maye from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes duringe the residewe of the saied terme of ffoure score and twelve yeares yet to come and unexpired, for the yearlie severall rents above by these presentes reserved, peaceblie, lawfullie and quietlie have, hold, occupie, possesse and enjoie the saied moyties, or one half of all and singler the saied tythes of corne, graine, blade, heye, wooll, lambe and other smalle and pryvie tythes, herbage, oblacions, obvencions, offerings, and other the premisses before by thees presentes graunted and assigned, or ment to be graunted and assigned, and everie parte and parcell thereof (except before excepted) without anie lett, trouble, entrie, distresse, claime, deniall, interrogacion, or molestacion whatsoever of the saied Raphe Huband, his executours, administratours, or assignes,

or of anie other person or personnes having or clayming to have, or which, att anie tyme hereafter, shall or maie have, or claime to have, anie thing of, in, to, or out of the afore graunted premisses or any parte thereof, by, from, or under the saied Raphe Huband, his executours, administratours, or assignes, or anie of them, (or by, from, or under the saied Sir John Huband, or by their or anie of their meanes, consent, forfeiture, act, or procurement,) and without anie lawfull lett, trouble, distresse, claime, deniall, entrie or demaunde whatsoever, other than for the saied yearelie rent of v.*li.* above reserved of the saied John Barker, his executors, administrators, or assignes, or anie of them, or of anie personne or personnes clayming by, from, or under them, or anie of them, (the state and interest of the Lord Carewe of and in the tythes of Bridgetowne and Ryen Clifford, and the interest of Sir Edward Grevill of and in the moytie of the tythe hay, wooll, lambe, and small and pryvie tythes, oblacions, obvencions, offerings, and proffitts, before by thees presentes graunted and assigned unto the saied William Shacksphare, which is to endure untill the feast of St. Michaell tharchangell next ensueing the date hereof, and noe longer, excepted and foreprised), and the saied Raphe Huband doth by thees presentes, for him his heires, executors, and administrators, covenaunte and graunte to and with the saied William Shakesphere, his executors, administrators, and assignes, that the saied moyties of the saied tythes before mencioned to be graunted to the saied William, and other the premisses (except before excepted) nowe are, and soe from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes hereafter duringe the residewe of the saied terme of ffourescore and twelve yeres yett to come and unexpired, shalbe, remaine, and continewe, accordinge to the intent and true meaninge of thees presentes, free and cleere, and freelie and clerelie acquited, exonerated and discharged, or well and sufficientlie saved and kept harmelesse, of and from all and all manner of bargainges, assignements, graunts, leases, recognizaunces, statutes marchcant, and of the staple, outlaries, judgements, execucions, entries, titles, troubles, charges, encumbraunces, and demaunds whatsoever, heretofore had, made, done, committed, omitted, done or suffered, or hereafter to be had, made, done, committed, omitted, done or suffered, by the saied Raphe Huband, Sir John Huband, and John Barker, or anie of them, their or any of their executors, administrators, or assignes, or anie of them, or by anie personne, or personnes whatsoever, clayming, or which at anie tyme hereafter during the residewe of the said terme, shall or maie claime, by, from, or under them or anie of them, their or anie of their executors, administrators, or assignes, or anie of them, or by their or anie of their meanes, act, graunte, forfeyture, consent, or procurement, and alsoe that he the saied Raphe Huband, his executors, administrators, and assignes, shall and will, from tyme to tyme and at all tymes during the space of three yeares next ensueinge, upon requeste, and att the costs and charges in the lawe of the saied William Shakesphere, his executors or assignes, doe, performe, and execute, and cause, permitt, and suffer to be done, performed, and executed, all and every suche further acte and acts, thing and things, devise and devises in the lawe, whatsoever, be yt or they by anie meane, course, act, devise, or assurannces in the lawe whatsoever, (as by the saied W. S. his executors or assignes, or his or their learned counsell in the lawe shalbe resonablie de-

vised, advised, or required,) for the further or more better or firmer assurans, suertie, suer makinge and conveyeinge of all and singuler the premisses before by thees presentes demised and assigned, or ment or intended to bee demised and assigned, and everie parte and parcell thereof, unto the saied William Shaksphere, his executors and assignes, during all the residewe of the saied terme of ffourescore and twelve yeares which bee yet to come and unexpired, according to the tenor and true meaninge of thees presentes, soe as the saied Raphe Huband bee not compelled to travell from his dwelling house att Ippesley aforesaid for the doeing thereof.

The above document appears to be only a draft for correction, and is indorsed "Barker's lease." The following bond proves its subsequent execution and ratification:

[*Bond from John Huband to William Shakespeare for the due performance of contract.*]

Noverint universi per præsentes me Radulphum Huband de Ippesley in com. Warr. armigerum teneri et firmiter obligari Willielmo Shakespeare de Stratforde super Avon in dicto com. Warr. generoso, in octingenta libris bonæ et legalis monetæ Angliæ solvend. eidem Willielmo, aut suo certo attorn. executoribus vel assign. suis, ad quam quidem solucionem bene et fideliter faciend. obligo me, hæredes, executores, et administratores meos firmiter per præsentes sigillo meo sigillat. Dat. vicesimo quarto die Julii, annis regni domini nostri Jacobi Dei gratia, Angliæ, Scociæ, Franciæ et Hiberniæ regis, fidei defensoris, &c. scilicet Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ, tertio, et Scociæ tricesimo octavo.

The condicion of this obligacion is suche, that if thabove bounden Raphe Hubande, his heires, executors, administrators and assignes, and every of them, shall and doe, from tyme to tyme and att all tymes, well and truelye observe, performe, fulfill and keepe all and everye covenaunte, graunte, article, clause, sentence, and thinge mencioned, expressed and declared in a certein writinge indented, bearing date with thees presentes, made betweene the sayed Raphe Hubande on thone parte and the abovenamed William Shakespear on thother parte, and which on the parte and behalfe of the saied Raphe, his heires, executors, administrators and assignes, or anie of them, are to bee observed, performed, fulfilled, or kept, according to the purporte and true meaninge of the saied writinge, That then this present obligacion to bee voyde and of none effect, or els to stand and abide in full force, power, and vertue.

Sealed and delivered in the presens of

Raffe Huband

Willm Huband

Antony Nashe & Fra Collyns

A copy of a rent-roll of the borough of Stratford, preserved in the Council Chamber, contains the following notice of the property to which the above documents refer. In the original, "the executours of Sir John Hubande" was formerly in the place of "Mr. William Shakespear," the latter name of course having been inserted after Shakespeare had made the purchase above mentioned.

Mr. Thomas Combes and Mr. William Shakespear doe holde all maner of tythes of corne, grayne, and hey, in the townes, hamlettes, villages, and feildes of Olde Stratford, Welcome and Bishopton, and all maner of tythes of woole, lambe, hempe, flaxe, and other smalle and privie tythes, for the yerely rent of xxxiiij.*li.* paiable at our Lady Day and Michaelmas.

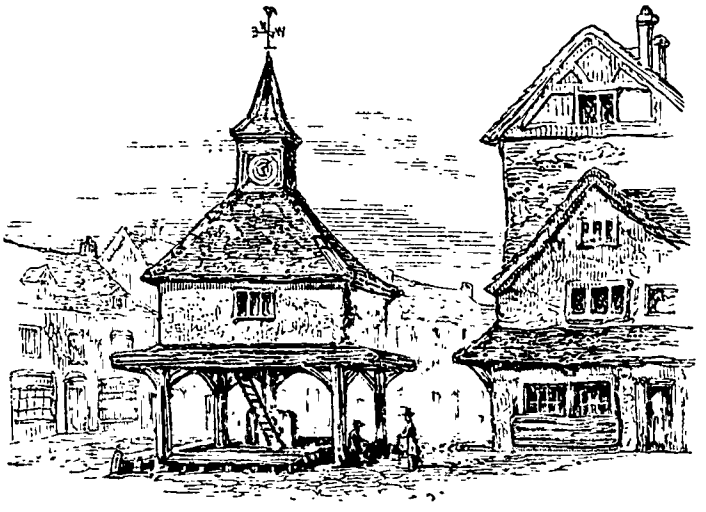
Ward, the vicar of Stratford on Avon, in his Diary written in 1662,* tells us that Shakespeare "frequented the plays all his younger time, but in his elder days livd at Stratford, and supplied the stage with two plays every year, and for that had an allowance so large that hee spent att the rate of 1000*d.* a yeer, *as I have heard.*" It is well for Ward's veracity that he had added this qualifying observation, for the amount of Shakespeare's annual expenditure, however large for those days, could not have reached half of that sum; but it is certain he must have been most successful in his profession, or his gains would not have enabled him to complete such large purchases as those which have just been mentioned. We must not, however, forget that, after the year 1605, he made few purchases of any magnitude, so that perhaps we may conclude he did not consider it necessary after that period to retain any large portion of his income for the purpose of increasing his possessions. With the exception of the house in the Blackfriars, there is no property

* MS. in the library of the Medical Society of London. It was published in 1839, but the extracts given in this work have been collated with the original, kindly shown to me by the President, W. C. Dendy, Esq.

mentioned in his will of which he was not possessed in 1605, supposing that the two houses in Henley street were inherited by him on his father's dying intestate in 1601, and there is every reason for believing that to have been the case. Shakespeare's property has been differently valued. According to Gildon, his income was £300 a year, but Malone computes it at £200, not having all the evidence before him that has now been made attainable. An exact opinion on this subject is difficult to form, for a portion of his property was perhaps employed before his death in making provisions for those members of his family who have been thought by some biographers to have been neglected by him in his will.

The exact period at which Shakespeare retired from the stage is not known, but he was one of the original actors in Ben Jonson's Sejanus, which was produced in 1603, and in a letter, hereafter quoted, supposed to have been written in 1608, he is described as "*till of late* an actor of good account in the cumpanie." His name also occurs in a list of the king's company appended to a letter dated April 9th, 1604, found by Mr. Collier at Dulwich College, but I have some doubt whether he might not have been retained in such a list as long as he continued to possess an interest in the profits of the theatre, even although he had relinquished his profession as an actor. It seems evident, from the curious document quoted at p. 208, that, in 1604, Shakespeare was occupied in pursuits of quite a different kind at Stratford, and the transactions there mentioned are of a character to lead us to believe he was then a resident in that town, especially as they are spread over a considerable period; but it must be kept in mind that the evidence in this respect is not sufficiently complete to enable us to decide with certainty the period of his permanent establishment at Stratford, for Aubrey's assertion that "he was wont to

goe to his native countrey once a yeare" sufficiently explains the circumstances above alluded to, if we can venture to adopt the opinion of a writer whose other statements are so improbable.



The Market Cross, Stratford, from the N.W.

It is beyond doubt that Shakespeare made, for those days, frequent journeys between Stratford and London. In the Corn-market, Oxford, a very few yards from Carfax church, may yet be seen an inn which has for centuries been known by the sign of the Crown. Its front is now quite modernised, but from a yard at the back may still be accurately traced considerable portions of the older building, and sufficiently distinct to enable the observer to bring to his mind the portraiture of a large rambling substantial hostelry of the Elizabethan period. The present frequenters of this establishment are little aware of the associations that have been conferred upon it by the antiquarian gossips of the seventeenth century. It was here,* according to Anthony

* Oxford was in the high road between London and Stratford, the route passing through Islip. Shakespeare was probably well acquainted with Oxford

Wood, that Shakespeare lodged "in his journies between Warwickshire and London." The tavern was then kept by John Davenant, father of Sir William, and the hostess, says Wood, "was a very beautiful woman, of a good wit and conversation, in which she was imitated by none of her children but by this William." Aubrey agrees with this account, but in his hands the story, as might be expected, is considerably improved upon, as the following extract from the life of Davenant in his manuscript collections in the Ashmolean Museum will show:

Sir William Davenant, knight, poet-laureate, was borne about the end of February in . . . . street in the city of Oxford, at the Crowne Taverne: baptized 3. of March, A. D. 1605-6. His father was John Davenant, a vintner there, a very grave and discreet citizen: his mother was a very beautifull woman, and of a very good witt, and of conversation extremely agreable. . . . . Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to goe into Warwickshire once a yeare, and did commonly in his journey lye at this house in Oxon, where he was exceedingly respected. *I have heard Parson Robert say that Mr. W. Shakspeare has given him a hundred kisses.* Now Sir Wm. would sometimes, when he was pleasant over a glasse of wine with his most intimate friends, e. g. Sam Butler (author of Hudibras) &c. say that it seemed to him that he writt with the very spirit that Shakespeare [did], and was* contented† enough to be thought his son; he would tell them the story as above. *Now, by the way, his mother had a very light report. In those days she was called a trader.*

The passages marked in italics have been carefully cancelled by a late hand, but the writing can with some difficulty be deciphered. All that can be gathered from

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and Islip. The following is an account of some Stratford people who went to London on the business of the corporation:

Charges leayd out when we went to the courte. [1592.]

Payd for our horsmeate the first night at Oxford - -	ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
And for our owne charges the same night - - -	ij.*s.* ij.*d.*
The second night at Iselipp for our suppers - - -	ij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
And for our horsemeate the same night at Iselipp - -	ij.*s.* viij.*d.*
They third day for our bayt and our horses at Hooke Norton -	xij.*d.*
And for walkinge our horses at Tetseworth and elsewhere - -	iij.*d.*
Som for this jorney, xj.*s.* j.*d.*	

* *Seemd* interlined.

† Contentended, MS.

Aubrey of a credible nature is the existence of an obscure tradition, about 1680, that Davenant was Shakespeare's son, and that Sir William appears to have preferred the credit of an illegitimate descent from the great poet to an humbler though more honest pedigree. There is no authority of much weight for the truth of Aubrey's narrative, but Oldys, in his MS. collections for a life of Shakespeare, repeats the tale, with some variations, as it was related to him by Pope.

If tradition may be trusted, Shakspeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and sprightly wit, and her husband, Mr. John Davenant, (afterwards mayor of that city) a grave melancholy man; who, as well as his wife, used much to delight in Shakspeare's pleasant company. Their son, young Will. Davenant (afterwards Sir William), was then a little school-boy in the town, of about seven or eight years old, and so fond also of Shakspeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from school to see him. One day an old townsman, observing the boy running homeward almost out of breath, asked him whither he was posting in that heat and hurry. He answered, to see his god-father Shakspeare. There's a good boy, said the other, but have a care that you don't take God's name in vain. This story Mr. Pope told me* at the Earl of Oxford's table, upon occasion of some discourse which arose about Shakspeare's monument then newly erected in Westminster Abbey; and he quoted Mr. Betterton the player for his authority. I answered, that I thought such a story might have enriched the variety of those choice fruits of observations he has presented us in his preface to the edition he had published of our poet's works. He replied, There might be in the garden of mankind such plants as would seem to pride themselves more in a regular production of their own native fruits, than in having the repute of bearing a richer kind by grafting; and this was the reason he omitted it.

* "The story of his visiting Shakespear when a boy, as Mr. Pope told me."—*Oldys, MS. notes to Langbaine.*

The reader will observe that Anthony Wood is our earliest authority for the Crown Inn having been Shakespeare's hostelry in his travels between the metropolis and his native town,* and Warton tells us that "it was always a constant tradition in Oxford that Shakspeare was the father of Davenant the poet," adding that he had seen the circumstance expressly mentioned in some of Wood's papers. The evidence here adduced cannot, however, be said to substantiate Aubrey's statement; but some writers have attacked Shakespeare's character on much more questionable grounds, relying solely on an entry in the Stratford baptismal register for 1600, "Wilhelmus filius Wilhelmi," for attributing another circumstance of the same kind to Shakespeare. This opinion is as little entitled to credit as the anecdote related by Oldys, which is a common one in early jest-books, and has been attributed to several individuals.†

Shakespeare's eldest daughter, Susanna, was married at Stratford, on June 5th, 1607, to John Hall, and the poet was most likely present at the nuptial ceremony, for that the union met with his special approval may be inferred from the position she occupies in her father's will. In the following December Shakespeare lost his brother Edmund, and, before another year had elapsed, his mother, who had

* Wood's words, speaking of Davenant, are,—"His mother was a very beautiful woman, of a good wit and conversation, in which she was imitated by none of her children but by this William. The father, who was a very grave and discreet citizen (yet an admirer and lover of plays and playmakers, especially Shakespeare, who frequented his house in his journies between Warwickshire and London), was of a melancholick disposition, and was seldom or never seen to laugh, in which he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert his eldest son, afterwards fellow of St. John's College, and a venerable doctor of divinity."

† "A boy, whose mother was noted to be one not overloden with honesty, went to seeke his godfather, and enquiring for him, quoth one to him, who is thy godfather? The boy repli'd, his name is goodman Digland the gardiner. Oh, said the man, if he be thy godfather, he is at the next alehouse, but I feare thou takest God's name in vaine."—*Taylor's Workes*, ed. 1630, ii. 184.

lived to witness the success of her eldest son, had also passed away. Mary Shakespeare was buried at Stratford on September 9th, 1608. Mr. Collier believes that the dramatist was at Stratford at this period, and attended the funeral of his mother. This is probable enough; but when the same writer tells us that "filial piety and duty would of course impel him to visit Stratford on the occasion," he forgot that had Shakespeare been in London at the time of his mother's death, her funeral would have taken place before the announcement of her decease could have reached him. On October 16th, in the same year, Shakespeare was godfather to William Walker, of Stratford, who is mentioned in his will; but this circumstance is hardly of itself sufficient to prove he was then at Stratford, for the office was one that was frequently performed by proxy.

At this period, 1608, Shakespeare had retired from the stage. This important fact is ascertained from a letter signed H. S., on behalf of the players of the Blackfriars Theatre, which was then attempted to be suppressed by the corporation of the city of London. These initials are presumed by Mr. Collier to belong to Henry Earl of Southampton, and the letter itself is perhaps the most interesting document relating to Shakespeare yet discovered. Unfortunately the original is not in existence, but a contemporary copy of it was found by Mr. Collier among the Egerton papers. It is without date, but it may safely be assigned to the year just mentioned, at which time we know from other sources how active the authorities of the city were in endeavouring to suppress the theatre.

My verie honored Lord. The manie good offices I have received at your Lordships handes, which ought to make me backward in asking further favors, onely imbouldeneth me to require more in the same kinde. Your Lordship wilbe warned howe hereafter you graunt anie sute, seeing it draweth on more and greater demaunds. This which now presseth is to request your Lordship, in all you can, to be good to the poore players of the Blacke ffryers, who call themselves by authoritie the Servantes of his Majestie, and aske for the proteccion of their most gracious Maister and Soveraigne in this the tyme of theire troble. They are threatened by the Lord Maior and Aldermen of London, never friendly to their calling, with the distruccion of their meanes of livelihood, by the pulling downe of their plaichouse, which is a private theatre, and hath never given ocasion of anger by anie disorders. These bearers are two of the chiefe of the companie; one of them by name Richard Burbidge, who humblie sueth for your Lordships kinde helpe, for that he is a man famous as our English Roscius, one who fitteth the action to the worde and the word to the action most admirably. By the exercise of his qualitie, industry, and good behaviour, he hath become possessed of the Blacke ffryers playhouse, which hath bene imployed for playes sithence it was builded by his ffather now nere 50 yeres agone. The other is a man no whitt lesse deserving favor, and my especial friende, till of late an actor of good account in the cumpanie, now a sharer in the same, and writer of some of our best English playes, which, as your Lordship knoweth, were most singulerly liked of Quene Elizabeth, when the cumpanie was called uppon to performe before her Majestie at Court at Christmas and Shrovetide. His most gracious Majestie King James alsoe, since his coming to the crowne, hath extended his royall favour to the companie in divers waies and at sundrie tymes. This other hath to name William Shakespeare, and they are both of one countie, and indeede allmost of one towne: both are right famous in their qualities, though it longeth not of your Lo. gravitie and wisedome to resort unto the places where they are wont to delight the publique eare. Their trust and sute nowe is not to bee molested in their waye of life whereby they maintaine themselves and their wives and families (being both maried and of good reputacion) as well as the widowes and orphanes of some of their dead fellows.

Your Lo. most bounden at com.

Copia vera. H. S.

The notice of Shakespeare in this manuscript is extremely interesting, not so much from the information it imparts, which is but trifling, but from its being nearly the only contemporary document in which the poet is thus familiarly introduced. This letter was discovered by Mr. Collier in the valuable collection of manuscripts belonging to the Earl of Ellesmere, and the fac-simile of that portion of it relating

to Shakespeare, which the reader will find at the commencement of this volume, will suffice to convince any one acquainted with such matters that it is a genuine manuscript of the period. No forgery of so long a document could present so perfect a continuity of design; yet it is right to state that grave doubts have been thrown on its authenticity. A portion of the fac-simile will exhibit on examination a peculiarity few suppositious documents would afford, part of the imperfectly formed letter *h* in the word *Shakespeare* appearing by a slip of the pen in the letter *f* immediately beneath it. It is of importance to decide upon the character of this paper, for on the degree of credit we may give to it depends the value of the other MSS. relating to Shakespeare discovered in the same collection; and it would be satisfactory were Mr. Collier to furnish the public with fac-simile copies of all of them.* At the same time, it must be admitted, in fairness to Mr. Collier, that, when the doubt of their authenticity was raised, he produced the letter of H. S., the one most severely attacked, before a council of the Shakespeare Society, and several competent judges, including Mr. Wright, fully concurred in believing it to be genuine. Mr. Hunter has systematically argued against the authority of all the Shakespearian documents found by Mr. Collier in Lord Ellesmere's collection, but how much reliance is to be placed on his conclusions may be inferred from the fact that the paper of the spuriousness of which he is most positive is preserved, not in that nobleman's library, but in the archives of the city of London, enrolled in books unquestionably authentic.† No reasons

* Mr. Knight seems to think it strange that a *copia vera* should want date and signature, but there is nothing very remarkable in such a circumstance. In the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, No. 201, art. 3, is preserved "a copye of the comyssion of sewers in the countye of Kent," marked as *vera copia*, and, singularly enough, written apparently by the same hand that copied the letter of H. S.

† I refer to the paper relating to Kemp and Armin, 1605.

absolutely fatal to the truth of Mr. Collier's discoveries have yet been produced. The quotation from Hamlet, on which so much stress has been laid, is not so remarkable as might be supposed, for it occurs as a kind of proverbial phrase in Heywood's Apology for Actors, 1612, and it is by no means impossible that it did not originate with Shakespeare.

The corporation of London failed in their endeavours to expel the king's players from the Blackfriars, but it appears that they were so anxious to accomplish their purpose, that negociations were commenced for the purchase of the interests of the proprietors and sharers of the theatre. To this circumstance we are indebted for a very singular document, detailing the value of these interests very minutely, and informing us of the exact claim made by Shakespeare on the occasion. It is preserved in the same collection in which the last paper was discovered.

For avoiding of the playhouse in the precinct of the Blacke Friers.

Imp. Richard Burbidge oweth the fee, and is alsoe a sharer therein. His interest he rateth at the grosse summe of 1000*li.* for the fee, and for his foure shares the summe of 933*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.* - - - 1933*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

Item, Laz. Fletcher owith three shares which he rateth at 700*li.* that is, at 7 yeares purchase for each share, or 33*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.* one yeare with another - - - - - - - 700*li.*

Item, W. Shakespeare asketh for the wardrobe and properties of the same playhouse 500*li.* and for his 4 shares the same as his fellowes Burbidge and Fletcher, viz. 933*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.* - - - - 1433*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

Item, Heminges and Condell, eche 2 shares - - 933*li.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

Item, Joseph Taylor, 1 share and an halfe - - 350*li.*

Item, Lowing, also one share and an halfe - - 350*li.*

Item, foure more playeres with one halfe share to eche of them 466*li.* 13*s.* 4*d.*

Summa totalis, 6166. 13. 4.

Moreover, the hired men of the companie demaund some recompense for their great losse, and the widowes and orphanes of playeres, who are paide by the sharers at divers rates and proportions, so as in the whole it will coste the Lo. Mayor and the citizens at the least 7000*li.*

It is somewhat singular that the wardrobe and properties were included in this estimate, but we may presume that, on such an occasion, the owners would allege their inutility, if deprived of the theatre, and we may perhaps also conclude that the valuation was rather on an extravagant scale. The shares which Shakespeare possessed in the Blackfriars produced him, as it appears from this list, £133 6*s.* 8*d.* a year, and Mr. Collier adds an annual £50 to this for the loan of the properties, so that supposing his income from the Globe were of the same amount, his theatrical property in 1608 was worth £366 13*s.* 4*d.* per annum. This was a large amount for those days, though far below the estimate I have previously quoted from Ward. A very curious passage in a tract called 'Ratseis Ghost, or the Second Part of his madde Prankes and Robberies,' printed about this period, is supposed by Mr. Collier to allude to Shakespeare's acquisition of wealth.*

A manuscript discovered by Mr. Collier at Dulwich College, informs us that "Mr. Shakespeare," in April, 1609, was assessed at sixpence a week towards the relief of the

* Ratsey was a highwayman, who had given some strolling players £2 for acting before him, and afterwards overtook them on their road, and robbed them of it. He gives them advice, and thus addresses himself to the principal performer:—

"And for you, sirrah, (says he to the chiefest of them,) thou hast a good presence upon a stage, methinks thou darkenst thy merit by playing in the country: get thee to London, for if one man were dead, they will have much need of such as thou art. There would be none, in my opinion, fitter than thyself to play his parts: my conceit is such of thee, that I durst all the money in my purse on thy head to play Hamlet with him for a wager. There thou shalt learne to be frugal (for players were never so thrifty as they are now about London), and to feed upon all men; to let none feed upon thee; to make thy hand a stranger to thy pocket, thy heart slow to perform thy tongue's promise; and when thou feelest thy purse well lined, buy thee some place of lordship in the country, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may there bring thee to dignity and reputation: then thou needest care for no man; no, not for them that before made thee proud with speaking their words on the stage. Sir, I thank you (quoth the player) for this good council: I promise you I will make use of it, for I have heard, indeed, of some that have gone to London very meanly, and have come in time to be exceeding wealthy."—*Collier's Hist. Dram. Poet.* i. 333.

poor in Southwark. If this relate to the poet, it was most likely on account of his property in the Globe, not for a dwelling-house, for in the spring of that year Shakespeare was probably at Stratford. The following declarations from the records of the court at Stratford, dated in March and June, 1609, are curious, as showing part of the history of a legal process instituted by Shakespeare against one John Addenbrooke for a small debt due to him. The sergeant at mace returning that Addenbrooke was not to be found within the liberty of the borough, Shakespeare proceeded against a person of the name of Horneby, who had become bail for the defendant.

Stratford } Precept. est servientibus ad clavam ibidem quod capiant, seu &c.,
Burgus. } Johannem Addenbrooke, si &c. et eum salvo &c. ita quod habeant corpus ejus coram ballivo burgi prædicti ad prox. cur. de recordo ibidem tenend. ad satisfaciend. Willielmo Shackspeare gen. tam de sex libr. debit. quos prædictus Willielmus in eadem curia versus eum recuperavit quam de viginti et quatuor solid. qui ei adjudicat. fuer. et dampnis et custag. suis quos sustinuit occasione detencionis debiti prædicti, et habeant ibi tunc hoc precept. teste ffrancisco Smyth jun. gen. ball. ibidem 15°. die Marcii, annis regni domini nostri Jacobi, Dei gracia regis Angliæ, ffranciæ et Hiberniæ, sexto, et Scotiæ 42°.

Indors. Infrajurat. Johannes non est invent. infra libertat. hujus burgi. ffr. Boyce servien.

Stratford } Precept. est servientibus ad clavam ibidem quod cum quidam
Burgus. } Willielmus Shackspeare gen. nuper in cur. domini Jacobi, nunc regis Angliæ, burgi prædicti ibidem tent. virtute literarum patent. domini Edwardi, nuper regis Angliæ, sexti, levavit quandam quer. suam versus quendam Johannem Addenbrooke de placito debiti, cumque eciam quidam Thomas Horneby de burgo prædicto in eadem quer. devenit pleg. et manucap. præd. Johannis, scilicet quod si prædictus Johannes in quer. ill. legitimo modo convinceretur, quod idem Johannes satisfaceret præfato Willielmo Shackspeare tam debit. in quer. ill. per præfat. Willielmum versus præd. Johannem in cur. præd. recuperand. quam mis. et custag. quæ eidem Willielmo in quer. ill. per eandem cur. adjudicat. forent versus eundem Johannem, vel idem se redderet prisonæ dicti domini regis Jacobi nunc burg. præd. ad satisfaciendum eidem Willielmo eadem debit. mis. et custag.; et ulterius quod si idem Johannes non satisfaceret eidem Willielmo debit. et mis. et custag. nec se redderet præd. prisonæ dicti domini regis nunc ad satisfaciendum eidem Willielmo in forma præd. quod tunc ipse idem Thomas Horneby debit. sic recuperand. et mis. et custag. sic adjudicat. eidem Willielmo satisfacere vellet. Cumque eciam in quer. ill. taliter process.

fuit in eadem curia quod prædictus Willielmus in loquela ill. per judicium ejusdem curiæ recuperabat versus prædictum Johannem tam sex libr. de debito quam viginti et quatuor solid. decrement. mis. et custag. ipsius Willielmi in sect. querela ill. apposit. Super quo precept. fuit servient. ad clavam ibidem quod capiant, seu &c. præd. Johannem, si &c. et eum salvo &c. ita quod habeant corpus ejus coram ballivo burgi prædicti ad prox. cur. de recordo ibidem tenend. ad satisfaciendum prædicto Willielmo de debito præd. sic recuperat, quam de viginti et quatuor solid. pro præd. dampnis et custag. adjudicat. unde ffranc. Boyce, tunc et nunc servien. ad clavam, ad diem retorn. inde mand. quod prædictus Johannes non est invent. in balliva sua; unde idem Willielmus ad præd. cur. dicti domini regis supplicavit sibi de remedio congruo versus præd. manucaptorem in hac parte provideri, super quod precept. est servient. ad clavam ibidem quod per probos et legales homines de burgo prædicto scire fac. seu &c. præfat. Thomam, quod sit coram ballivo burgi præd. ad prox. cur. de recordo in burgo prædicto tenend. ostensur. si quid pro se habeat vel dicere sciat, quare prædictus Willielmus execucionem suam versus eundem Thomam de debito et mis. et custag. ill. habere non debeat, juxta vim, formam, et effectum manucapcionis præd. si sibi viderit expedire, et ulterius factur. et receptur. quod præd. cur. dicti domini regis cons. in ea parte; et habeant ibi tunc hoc preceptum: teste ffranc. Smyth jun. gen. ball. ibidem septimo die Junii, annis regni domini nostri Jacobi, Dei gratia regis Angliæ, ffranc. et Hiberniæ, septimo, et Scotiæ 42°.

Early in the following year, we find Shakespeare named in the draft of a warrant of Privy Seal, appointing him with Daborne, Field, and Kirkman, to preside over a juvenile company called the Children of her Majesty's Revels. It does not appear that this warrant was carried into effect, as far as Shakespeare was concerned. This draft was found by Mr. Collier in the archives of the Earl of Ellesmere.

Right trusty and welbeloved &c. James &c. To all mayors, sherriffs, justices of the peace, &c. Whereas the Queene, our dearest wife, hath for her pleasure and recreation appointed her servaunts Robert Daiborne, &c. to provide and bring upp a convenient nomber of children, who shall be called the Children of her Majesties Revells, knowe ye that we have appointed and authorized, and by these presents doe appoint and authorize, the said Robert Daiborne, William Shakespeare, Nathaniel Field, and Edward Kirkham, from time to time, to provide and bring upp a convenient nomber of children, and them to instruct and exercise in the quality of playing tragedies, comedies, &c. by the name of the Children of the Revells to the Queene, within the Black-fryers in our citie of London, or elswhere within our realme of England. Wherefore we will and commaund you, and everie of you, to permitt her said servaunts to keepe a convenient nomber of children by the name of the Children of the Revells to the Queene, and them to exercise in the qualitie of playing, according to her royall

pleasure. Provided alwaies that no playes, &c. shall be by them presented, but such playes, &c. as have received the approbation and allowance of our Maister of the Revells for the tyme being. And these our lettres shall be your sufficient warrant in this behalfe. In witnesse whereof, &c. 4°. die Janii 1609.

It clearly appears from this paper, that Shakespeare's activity and connexion with theatricals had not ceased in 1610; but it has usually been considered that soon after this period he made a final retirement to Stratford. During the latter part of his life, the drama had been greatly discouraged in his native town, and this fact renders his attachment to Stratford still more remarkable. On December 17th, 1602, it was "ordered that there shalbe no pleys or enterlewedes playd in the chamber, the guildhalle, nor in any parte of the howsse or courte, ffrom hensforward, upon payne that whosoever of the bayliff, aldermen, and burgesses of this boroughe shall gyve leave or licence thereunto, shall forfeyt for everie offence x.*s.*" But it seems that this penalty had not the desired effect, for on February 7th, 1612, the following more stringent order appears on the register of the corporation.

The inconvenience of plaies beinge verie seriouslie considered of, with the unlawfullnes, and howe contrarie the sufferance of them is againste the orders hearetofore made, and againste the examples of other well-governed citties and burrowes, the companie heare are contented and theie conclude that the penaltie of x.*s.* imposed in Mr. Bakers yeare for breakinge the order, shall from henceforth be x.*li.* upon the breakers of that order, and this to holde untill the nexte commen councell, and from thencforth for ever, excepted, that be then finalli revoked and made voide.

We have already seen that Shakespeare was not at Stratford in May, 1602, when the indentures relating to his purchase of land from the Combes were to be executed. In Trinity Term, 1611,* a fine was levied on this property,

* The name of Mr. William Shackspere occurs in a list of donations, "Colected towards the charge of prosecutyng the bill in Parliament for the better repaire of the high waies, and amendinge divers defects in the statutes alredy made, Wednesdaye the xj.th of September, 1611."

between William Shakespeare, plaintiff, and William and John Combe, defendants, but twenty acres of pasture land, not mentioned in the previous indentures, are here described with the one hundred and seven acres of arable land; so that Shakespeare may have added to his former purchase. The one hundred pounds here assigned as the purchase money was probably a mere legal fiction. The foot of this fine, here given from the original preserved at the Chapter House, has not been hitherto noticed.

Inter Willielmum Shakespere generosum quer. et Willielmum Combe armigerum et Johannem Combe generosum deforc. de centum et septem acris terræ et viginti acris pasturæ cum pertinentiis in Old Stratford et Stratford super Avon, unde placitum convencionis sum. fuit inter eos, &c. Scilicet quod prædicti Willielmus Combe et Johannes recogn. prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis esse jus ipsius Willielmi Shakespere ut illa quæ idem Willielmus habet de dono prædictorum Willielmi Combe et Johannis, et ill. remiser. et quietclam. de ipsis Willielmo Combe et Johanne et hæredibus suis prædicto Willielmo Shakespere et hæredibus suis in perpetuum; et præterea idem Willielmus Combe concessit pro se et hæredibus suis quod ipsi warant. prædicto Willielmo Shakespere et hæredibus suis prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis contra prædictum Willielmum Combe et hæredes suos in perpetuum. Et ulterius idem Johannes concessit pro se et hæredibus suis quod ipsi warant. prædicto Willielmo Shakespere et hæred. suis prædicta tenementa cum pertinentiis contra prædictum Johannem et hæredes suos in perpetuum. Et pro hac &c. idem Willielmus Shakespere dedit prædictis Willielmo Combe et Johanni centum libras sterlingorum. [Trin. 8 Jac. I.]

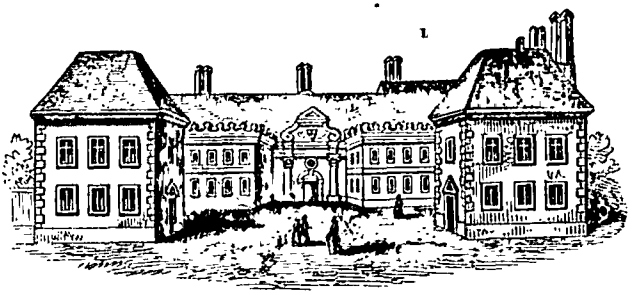
This transaction with the Combes leads me to one of the best known and most popular traditions relating to Shakespeare, his satirical verses on John a Combe. Aubrey's version of the anecdote has been already given (p. 85), but Rowe's account is rather more minute,—

The latter part of his life was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather an estate equal to his occasion, and, in that, to his wish; and is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford. His pleasurable wit and good nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendship of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Amongst them, it is a story almost still remembered in that country, that he had a particular intimacy with Mr. Combe, an old gentleman noted thereabouts

for his wealth and usury: it happened that in a pleasant conversation amongst their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakspeare in a laughing manner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to outlive him; and since he could not know what might be said of him when he was dead, he desired it might be done immediately; upon which Shakspeare gave him these four lines:

Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd;
'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not sav'd:
If any man ask, Who lies in this tomb?
Oh! oh! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe.*

But the sharpness of the satire is said to have stung the man so severely, that he never forgave it.



Stratford College, the residence of John Combe.

The lines recorded by Aubrey and Rowe are constantly found, under slightly varied forms, in epigrammatical collections of the seventeenth century.† As usual with tra-

* He is generally called *John Combe*, but his name appears *John a Combes* in some undated fragments of a subsidy roll at Carlton Ride.

† *In Dominum Edov. Stanhop fœnerat.*

Ten in the hundred lies under this stone,
An hundred to ten to the devil he's gone.
MS. Addit. 15227, p. 18.

Here lyes 10 with 100 under this stone,
A 100 to one but to th' divel hees gone.
MS. Sloane 1489, f. 11.

Who is this lyes under this hearse?
Ho, ho, quoth the divel, tis my Dr. Pearse.
MS. Sloane 1489, f. 11.

Here lies at least ten in the hundred,
Shackled up both hands and feet,
That at such as lent mony *gratis* wondred,
The gain of usury was so sweet;
But thus being now of life bereav'n,
Tis a hundred to ten he's scarce gone to heav'n.
Wits Interpreter, the English Parnassus, 1671.

ditions, for *omnis fabula fundatur in historia*, we find the general statement accurate, and the particulars incorrect. Shakespeare did write verses on Combe, but not the doggrel assigned to him. It appears, from an account of a journey undertaken in 1634, preserved in MS. Lansd. 213,* that three officers of the army saw in that year at Stratford, "a neat monument of that famous English poet, Mr. Wm. Shakespeere, who was borne heere; and one of an old gentleman, a batchelor, Mr. Combe, *upon whose name* the sayd poet did merrily fann up some witty and facetious verses, which time would nott give us leave to sacke up." These verses were of course, as Mr. Hunter says, "written in the punning style of the times, allusive to the double sense of the word *Combe*, as the name of the person there interred, and the name also of a certain measure of corn," but it is not at all likely such lines were ever in Stratford church, as Mr. Hunter asserts, and there is nothing in the extract just given to warrant such a conclusion. According to Rowe, Shakespeare offended Combe by the satire, but this at least is very doubtful, for Combe left him a legacy of £5 in 1614, and the poet gave his sword, by will, to

* Hunter's New Illustrations, vol. i. p. 88. The MS. is entitled, "A relation of a short survey of 26. counties, breifly describing the citties and their scytuations, and the corporate townes and castles therein, observ'd in a seven weekes journey begun at the city of Norwich, and from thence into the North, on Monday, August 11th, 1634, and ending att the same place; by a captaine, a lieutennant, and an ancient, all three of the military company in Norwich." The reader will not, perhaps, object to a copy of all that relates to Stratford:

In that dayes travell we came by Stratford upon Avon, where in the church in that towne there are some monuments, which church was built by Archbishop Stratford. Those worth observing, and which wee tooke notice of, were these.

A monument for the E. of Totnes and his lady, yet living.

The monument of Sr. Hugh Clopton, who built that strong stone bridge of 18. fayre arches over that river. He was Ld. Mayor of London.

A neat monument of that famous English poet, Mr. Wm. Shakespeere, who was borne heere.

And one of an old gentleman, a batchelor, Mr. Combe, upon whose name the sayd poet did merrily fann up some witty and facetious verses, which time would nott give us leave to sacke up.—*MS. Lansd.* 213, f. 336.

Mr. Thomas Combe. The Combes and Shakespeares were doubtlessly on friendly terms, and the respectable position which John Combe held at Stratford will be seen from his will, which I here print for the first time. It will be found of importance in deciding on the evidence respecting the anecdote above mentioned; and its publication is a late act of justice to a man who does not appear to have in any way deserved the popular slander that has descended on his name. As far as can be judged from his will, nothing is there to be found inconsistent with a character of perfect fairness and liberality.*

In the name of God, amen! I John Combe, of Old Stretford in the county of Warwick, gent., being both in perfect health and memory, God be thanked, do make, ordain, and declare my last will and testament in manner and form following, that is to say, first I commend my soul to God my Maker, hoping and stedfastly believing that through the only merits of Jesus Christ, my alone Saviour and Redeemer, I shall after this life ended be partaker of the life everlasting, and my body to be buried in the Parish Church of Stretford upon Avon in the said county of Warwick, near the place where my mother was buried; and my will is that a convenient tombe of the value of threescore pounds shall be by my executors hereafter named, out of my goods and chattels first raised, within one year after my decease, be sett over me. Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin Sir Henry Clare knight two hundred pounds of lawful English money, to be paid unto him within six months after my decease, and if he die before then, I will and bequeath the said two hundred pounds to Frances Combe, his daughter, to be paid to her within the said six months. Item, I give and bequeath to my brother John Combe all that my messuage or tenement with the appurtenances wherein William Cawdery alias Cooke nowe dwelleth, situate, lying, and being in Warwick in the said county of Warwick, near and adjoining to the Gable there, to have and to hold the same unto the said John Combe my brother, for and during the term of his life, and after his decease, the reversion and remainder thereof to be to the use and behoof of the heirs males of the body of the said John Combe lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and, for want of such heirs, to the heirs males of the body of my nephew

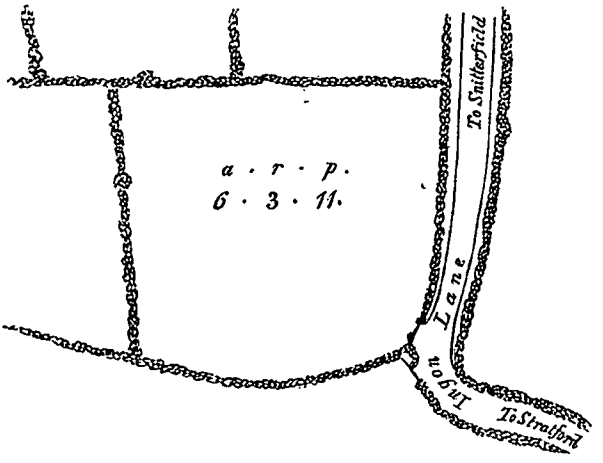
* Combe was employed by the Earl of Warwick to collect the rents of the manor of Stratford.

Md. that John Combes gent. bailye of Stretford had, by the graunte of Ambrose Erle of Warwick by Patent, for his ffee for gatheringe the rents ther - - - - - - - liij.*s.* iiij.*d.* yerelye.

MS. Inquisition at the Carlton Ride Record Office, 1590.

William Combe esquire, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to the use and behoof of my nephew Thomas Combe gent. and of the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to my brother George Combe and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to the right heirs of me the said John Combe for ever. Item, I give and bequeath to the children of my brother John Combe the sum of three hundred pounds of lawful English money to be paid unto them within six months after their father's decease, and to be equally divided amongst them, I mean those of his children as shall be living at his decease, and in the mean time my will is, and so I bequeath and devise the said three hundred pounds shall within one year after my decease be raised out of my goods and chattels and be set forth or otherwise employed to the best use it may be, and the use and profit coming thereof to be paid yearly to my said brother John Combe during his life to his own use, and towards the bringing up of his children. Item, I give, will, devise and bequeath unto the said William Combe one close or ground with the appurtenances called Pole Close, and one close or ground called Wallnut-trye Close, and one other close or ground with the appurtenances lately divided into two grounds called Ingon Grove, all of them situate, lying and being within the parish of Bishops Hampton alias Hampton Lucie in the said county of Warwick, to have and to hold the same to the said William Combe and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs the reversion and remainder thereof to be and remain to my said nephew Thomas Combe and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to my brother George Combe for and during his natural life, and after his decease to my nephew John Combe, son of the said George, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to the use and behoof of my brother John Combe, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to the right heirs of me the said John Combe for ever. Item, I give, will, bequeath and devise to my said nephew Thomas Combe, all those grounds or closes of land meadow and pasture lying and being in Hampton aforesaid, with their and every their appurtenances, called or known by the several names of Syndrye Meadow, Rynell alias Rynhill, and Priest Croft, to have and to hold the same to my said nephew Thomas Combe, and to the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and, for default of such heirs, the said last mentioned premises to be and remain to the use and behoof of the said William Combe, and the heirs males of his body begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to my said brother George for and during his natural life, and after his decease, to my said nephew John his son, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to my brother John and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to the right heirs of me the said John for ever. Item, I give, will, bequeath and devise unto my said brother George Combe all those

closes or grounds with the appurtenances, called or known by the name of Parson's Close* alias Shakespere's Close, lying and being in Hampton aforesaid, to have and to hold the same to the said George Combe for and during the term



Parson's Close alias Shakespeare's Close.

of his natural life, and after his decease the said last mentioned premises with their appurtenances, and the reversion and reversions thereof, to be and remain to my said nephew John Combe, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to my nephew William Combe, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to my nephew Thomas Combe, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to my said brother John Combe, and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs to the right heirs of me the said John Combe for ever. Item, I give and bequeath unto Thomas Raynoldes, son of Thomas Raynoldes of Old Stretford aforesaid gentleman, one hundred pounds of lawful English money. To my cousin Margaret Raynoldes, wife of the said Thomas Raynoldes the elder, one hundred pounds of lawful English money. To the children of Jane Featherston, daughter of the said Thomas Raynoldes the elder, one hundred pounds of lawful English money, equally to be divided amongst them, and to be paid unto the said children at the decease of the said Jane; and my will and meaning is and so I devise and will that the said one hundred pounds shall within one year after my decease be set forth by my executors and overseers to the best use and commodity that

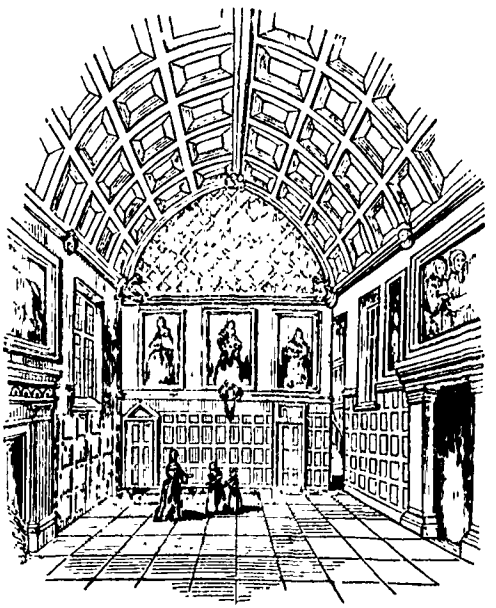
* In indentures dated 1736 and 1760, Parson's Close is described as containing twenty-five acres, heretofore in the tenure of Francis Oldfield, since of Hiccox, and late in the tenure of Sir John Clopton or his assigns or under tenants.

may be, and the use thereof coming shall be paid yearly to the said Jane during her life for her maintenance. Item, I give and bequeath to Margaret Raynoldes, daughter of the said Thomas, twenty pounds. To every one of the rest of my cousin Thomas Raynoldes his children ten pounds apiece, to be paid within one year after my decease, and my will is and so I devise that if any of the children of the said Thomas Raynoldes happen to die, then his her and their legacy so dying shall be and remain amongst the rest of his now children as shall be then living, equally to be divided amongst them. Item, I give and bequeath to my brother George Combe my best suit of apparel and my second gown, and if he be not living at my decease, my will is that his son shall have the said apparel and gown. Item, I give and bequeath to my sister Hyett and her children one hundred marks of lawful English money to be paid within six months after my decease, and to be equally divided amongst them. Item, I give and bequeath unto my nieces Mary Combe and Joyce Combe, daughters of my brother Thomas Combe deceased, one hundred pounds apiece of lawful English money to be paid within one year after my decease, and if either of them die before her legacy be due to them, my will is and soe I devise that her legacy so dying shall be paid and remain to the survivor of them, and if both of them so die, then my will is and so I devise that both their legacies shall remain and be paid unto my brother George his two daughters, equally to be divided between them. Item, I give and bequeath to my said brother George his two daughters one hundred marks apiece of lawful English money, to be paid unto them within one year after my decease, and if either of them die before that time, her legacy so dying shall remain and be paid to the survivor of them, and if they both die before their legacies be due, my will is and so I do devise that both their legacies shall remain and be paid unto the said Mary and Joyce Combe, equally to be divided between them. Item, I do give, will, and devise unto my cousin Margaret Reynoldes, wife of the said Thomas Raynoldes the elder, all my right and title I have to those grounds called Samon Joale and Samon Tayle lying and being within the parish of Stretford upon Avon in the county of Warwick, to have and to hold the same for and during the term of her natural life, and after her decease, the said last mentioned premises and the reversion thereof to be and remain to William Raynoldes her son, and the heirs males of her body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to Thomas Reynoldes her son and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to Walter Reynoldes her son and the heirs and the heirs males of his body lawfully begotten and to be begotten, and for default of such heirs, to the right heirs of the said Margaret Reynoldes for ever. Item, I give, bequeath and release unto my said cousin, Thomas Reynoldes the elder, all such sums of money and debts which he oweth unto me, and thereof, and of all reckonings accompts and demands whatsoever, I do by this my will release acquit and discharge him, the said Thomas Reynoldes the elder, his heirs, executors, and administrators forever. Item, I give and bequeath unto my said cousin Margaret Raynoldes all my plate, my best gown, and all my household stuff except my apparel. Item,

I give and bequeath unto my servant Richard Mason, if he be my servant at my death, fifty pounds of lawful English money; to Audrean Holder, if he be my servant at my decease, thirty pounds of lawful English money. To John Featherston, ten pounds. To Robert Davies, if he be my servant at my death, twenty pounds. To Richard Burnett, if he be my servant at my decease, twenty shillings; and to Panckeridge, if he be my servant at my decease, fourty shillings; and to my cousin Thomas Reynoldes the elder, his servants, such as shall be his servants at my decease, five shillings apiece. All these legacies to be paid within one year after my decease. Item, I give and bequeath to my uncle, John Blunt, if he be living at my decease, fourty shillings to buy him a ring. To my cousin Anne Dickins, five pounds to buy her a ring. To my god-daughter Garden twenty pounds, and to her sister ten pounds, to be paid within one year after my decease. Item, I give, will and bequeath, one hundred pounds of lawful English money to be used and employed for ever according to my intent and meaning hereafter expressed in this my will, that is to say, and my will is, that my executors and overseers hereafter herein named shall, within one year after my decease, upon good and reasonable security, lend the said hundred pounds unto fifteen poor or young tradesmen, occupiers or handicraftsmen dwelling within the borough of Stretford upon Avon aforesaid, viz. to every one of them twenty nobles apiece for the term of three years, every one of them paying yearly during the said three years the sum of three shillings and four pence at the feasts of Saint Michael the archangel and the Annunciation of blessed Mary the Virgin by equal portions, and at the end of the said three years to fifteen others for three years, every one paying yearly 3*s*. 4*d*. in manner aforesaid; so from three years to three years for ever, paying as aforesaid, according to my true meaning, which said yearly several sums of three shillings and fourpence before mentioned to be paid as aforesaid for the said one hundred pounds, shall be and for ever remain to the use of the almsfolks of Stretford aforesaid. And my will is, and so I do desire that my executors and overseers, or the survivor of them, will take such order either with the bailiff or burgesses of the borough of Stretford aforesaid for the time being, or by some other way or mean, that the said hundred pounds and the benefit thereof coming may continue for ever according to my meaning before expressed. Item, I give and bequeath to the poor of Stretford twenty pounds, to the poor of Warwick five pounds, and to the poor of Alcester five pounds. Item, I give unto William White fourty shillings which he oweth me by bond, if he be living at my decease, and the same bond to be cancelled. To Mr. William Shackspere five pounds, and to my landlord John Davies 40*s*. Item, I give and bequeath unto Francis Collines the elder of the borough of Warwick ten pounds of lawful English money, and to my godson John Collens his son other ten pounds of like lawful English money, to be paid unto them within one year after my decease, and if either of them die before receipt of his said legacy, then my will is and so I devise and bequeath that the survivors of them shall have his legacy that shall so happen to die: and if the said Francis and John Collens happen to die before the time appointed for the payment of their legacies,

then my will is, and so I devise and bequeath both their legacies of ten pounds apiece to Susanna Collens, wife of the said Francis, and to the eldest son of the said Francis equally betwixt them. Item, I give and bequeath to the said Susanna Collens six pounds thirteen shillings four pence of lawful English money, and to Mr. Henry Walker twenty shillings. Item, I give and bequeath unto my servants Richard Mason and Audrian Holder, if they be my servants at the time of my decease, all my wearing apparel not before given, except that apparel that was my uncle William Combes; and if they be not my servants, then to such persons as my executors shall appoint. Item, I give and bequeath to my cousin Thomas Reynoldes the elder, and Margaret his wife, my team of oxen which I shall have at my decease, and if I then shall have no team, then I give and bequeath forty marks of lawful English money; and also I give unto them, the said Thomas and Margaret, my waynes, tumbrells, ploughs, and other things belonging to a team. Item, I give and bequeath unto Sir Francis Smith, knight, five pounds to buy him a hawk, and to the Lady Anne his wife fourty pounds of lawful English money to buy her a bason and ewer; and unto Mrs. Palmer, the wife of John Palmer esquire, 40.*s.* to buy her a ring. Item, I give and bequeath to every one of my godchildren before not named five shillings apiece. Item, I give will bequeath and devise to my cousin Thomas Combe, his heirs and assigns for ever, all my meadow ground with the appurtenances in Shottery meadow, to the uses intents and purposes hereafter herein mentioned, that is to say that he the said Thomas Combe, his heirs and assigns, shall yearly and every year for ever pay to a learned preacher twenty shillings to make a sermon twice a year at Stretford church aforesaid, and also shall and do yearly and every year for ever, one week before the feast of the Nativity of our Lord God, give and deliver to such ten poor people within the borough of Stretford aforesaid as shall be yearly appointed and elected by the bailiff and chief alderman for the time being of the said borough, and two of the ancientest aldermen there, ten black gowns, every one of them worth thirteen shillings and four pence apiece: and if my said nephew Thomas Combe, his heirs or assigns, shall or do not pay the said twenty shillings yearly to a preacher, and give and deliver the said gowns, then my will is, and so I will and devise that it shall be lawful to and for the bailiff and burgesses of the borough of Stretford aforesaid and their successors for the time being, from time to time and at all times hereafter, so often as the said twenty shillings shall not be yearly paid to a preacher, or the said gowns or any of them delivered and given as aforesaid, according to my will and meaning herein mentioned, to enter into the said meadow ground and every part and parcel thereof, and the issues and profits thereof, to pay give and satisfy the yearly sum of twenty shillings so behind unpaid and the arrearages thereof, if any be, together with the said gowns as shall be behind undelivered, according to this my will, and after, the said meadow ground to be to the said Thomas Combe his heirs and assigns, charged as aforesaid. Item, I give and bequeath to every one of my good and just debtors for every twenty pounds that any man oweth me, twenty shillings, and so after this rate, for a greater or lesser debt, to be delivered back to them by my executors when they pay in their debts. All the rest of my goods, chattels, leases, credits,

and rights whatsoever, after my debts and legacies paid, and my funerals discharged according to my degree, and my will performed, which I will and charge my executors to do within one year and an half after my decease, upon pain of forfeiture of such legacies of as well of lands as money or goods I leave or do herein give and bequeath unto my said nephew Thomas Combe. And I do make and ordain the said Thomas Combe, Sir Richard Verney, knight, and Bartholomew Hales, esquire, executors of this my last will and testament. And I do give and bequeath to the said Sir Richard Varney and Bartholomew Hales twenty pounds apiece of lawful English money, and also I do nominate and appoint Sir Edward Blunt, knight, Sir Henry Rainsford, knight, Sir Francis Smith, knight, and John Palmer of Compton, esquire, to be overseers of this my will, unto whom I give five pounds apiece, or unto every one of them a silver salt worth five pounds. Item, I give to Mrs. Barnes fourty shillings to buy her a ring, and to the Lady Rainsford fourty shillings to buy her a ring; And my will is and so I do devise that if any person whatsoever before named shall dislike of such legacies as I have herein devised or bequeathed unto them, and not hold themselves therewith contented, shall lose the same and all other benefit that they can any way claim by this my will. And I do hereby revoke all former wills by me heretofore made; and do declare and publish this to be my last will and testament, and have unto every sheet hereof written my name.



Interior of the Hall of Stratford College, 1785.

Posterity has reason to deplore the haste of the three officers in their tour of 1634, for their want of time to

"sack up" the verses on Combe, has deprived us of the benefit of receiving what Shakespeare really wrote on his friend. These, perhaps, will never be recovered, but it is worthy of remark that a different version of the anecdote is related in MS. Ashmole 38, p. 180,* written not many years after the death of Shakespeare,—

On John Combe, a coveteous rich man, Mr. Wm. Shak-spear wright this att his request while hee was yett liveing for his epitaphe,

Who lies in this tombe?
Hough, quoth the devill, tis my sone John a Combe.
Finis.

But being dead and making the poore his heiers, hee after wrightes this for his epitaph.

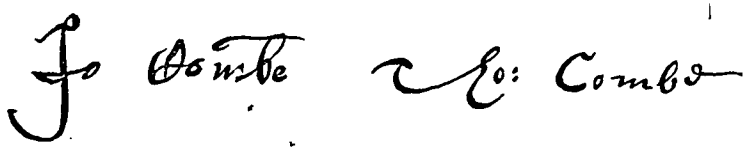
Howere he lived, judge not,
John Combe shall never be forgott
While poor hath memmorye, for hee did gather
To make the poore his issue: hee their father,
As record of his tilth and seedes,
Did crowne him in his latter needes.
Finis W. Shak.

Peck, in his New Memoirs of Milton, 1740, has preserved another tale, in which it is stated that Shakespeare wrote another satirical epitaph on the brother of John Combe. It is equally authentic with the former. "Every body," he says, "knows Shakespeare's epitaph for John a Combe, and I am told he afterwards wrote another for Tom a Combe, alias Thin-beard, brother of the said John, and that it was never yet printed." This second composition is in the following strain,—

Thin in beard, and thick in purse,
Never man beloved worse;
He went to th' grave with many a curse:
The devil and he had both one nurse.

* This curious extract was first published by me in 1841, in "An Introduction to Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream," 8vo.

It will be observed that the composers of this and other similar stanzas attributed to the bard, among which may be included the vulgar lines over his grave, are never satisfied without introducing his Satanic majesty on the scene, or, at the least, his ordinary legacy, a curse. We must not so readily deprive our poet of his contemporary epithet, the gentle Shakespeare; for none of these can safely be assigned to his pen. It is however, worth adding, that in the last century there was a traditionary tale current at Stratford, which included the verses on John and Thomas Combe, and in which they are introduced somewhat differently from the narratives just given.



Mr. Combe and the bard of Stratford were intimately acquainted; the former one day in a tavern, said to be the sign of the Bear, in the Bridge street, in Stratford, said to the other, "I suppose you will write my epitaph when I am dead; you may as well do it now, that I may know what you will say of me when I am gone." Immediately he replied, "It shall be this, 'Ten in the hundred, &c.'" The company instantly burst into a loud laugh, perhaps from the justness of the idea, and the hatred all men have to the character of a miser and usurer: the violence of the mirth somewhat subsiding, they desired to hear what he had to say of Mr. Thomas Combe, brother of the former gentleman, when he instantly said, "But thin in beard, &c." This brother was remarkable for the thinness of his beard, and no doubt also for his covetous disposition; therefore the poignancy of the sarcasm afforded no small diversion amongst the convivial meeting; but it is said the severity of this satire made so deep an impression upon the two brothers, that they never forgave the author of their epitaphs.

Another traditionary anecdote has likewise been stated to refer to Combe, but the best version of it introduces a blacksmith as the chief actor, and Combe's name does not appear. A blacksmith accosted Shakespeare, as he was leaning over a mercer's door, with

Now, Mr. Shakespeare, tell me, if you can,
The difference between a youth and a young man.

To which the poet immediately replied,—

Thou son of fire, with thy face like a maple,
The same difference as between a scalded and a coddled apple.

According to Malone, in 1790, "this anecdote was related near fifty years ago to a gentleman at Stratford, by a person then above eighty years of age, whose father might have been contemporary with Shakespeare." I have, however, seen an unpublished letter, written by Malone in 1788, in which the following account of this tradition is given.

Mr. Macklin tells but a blind story of Sir Hugh Clopton's having sent for a very old woman, near ninety, who repeated to him a couplet that she remembered to have heard in her youth, and which was said to have been made by Shakspeare on old John Combe, in which he compared his face to a maple. I gave no great credit to this at first, but having yesterday found the same satirical comparison in a book of Queen Elizabeth's age, I begin to be less incredulous. Perhaps Mr. Taylor may remember this old woman. It is certain much tradition might have been handed down about our great poet, for the mother of the very old woman I speak of might have been a servant to his daughter Mrs. Queeny, and have heard many particulars from her so late as the Restoration, but unfortunately the last age was not an age of curiosity or inquiry.

The old work to which Malone referred in confirmation of this anecdote was, 'Tarltons Jests drawne into these three parts, his court-witty jests, his sound city jests, his countrey-pretty jests, full of delight, wit, and honest mirth,' 4to. 1638, first published in 1600, and also containing an anecdote (sig. B 2) in which a person's face is compared to a maple.

A jest of an apple hitting Tarlton on the face.

Tarlton having flouted the fellow for his pippin which hee threw, hee thought to bee meet with Tarlton at length, so in the play Tarltons part was to travell, who kneeling down to aske his father blessing, the fellow threw an apple at him, which hit him on the cheek. Tarlton, taking up the apple, made this jest:

Gentlemen, this fellow, with this face of mapple,
Instead of a pippin hath throwne me an apple.
But as for an apple, he hath cast a crab,
So, instead of an honest woman, God hath sent him a drab.

The people laughed heartily, for he had a quean to his wife.

It is worthy of remark that a similar comparison is used by Shakespeare, "this grained face of mine;" and considering that the genealogy of the tale is very correctly deduced by Malone, there may by possibility have been some foundation for it. At all events, it is of better authority than the anecdotes relating to Shakespeare that found their way into the jest books of the last century, a few of which, as specimens of what people dared to father on the *clarum et venerabile nomen* of Shakespeare, I give in a note* from a rare volume in the library of George Daniel, Esq.

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* A gentleman being choaked with a honeycomb, his friends began to bemoan him. Why make you such lamentation, said Shakespear, never man had a sweeter death.

A country gentleman once telling Shakespear he was surprized there was so many pickpockets in London, seeing there was a watch at every corner. Pough, replies Shakespear, they are as glad of a watch as any else.

Shakespear being at church when a dry empty fellow preached most of his auditors out of the church, said he made a very moving sermon.

Shakespear being with a set of merry companions over a chearful bowl, when different toasts were going round, a gentleman whose name was Brown toasted an absent lady, which he had often done for many years, tho he never had the courage to speak to her. Our wag, who sat next him, said, I believe, sir, you have toasted that lady these seven years at least, and it's surprizing she is not *brown* yet.

Shakespear being in company with some gentlemen and ladies who were playing at comparison, an agreeable young lady was likened to a repeater. She appealed to Shakespear for the propriety of the resemblance. Madam, says he, I find a very great difference; a repeater makes us remember the hours, but you make us forget them.

Shakespear having brought his friend down into his cellar, his friend observing there was no seat to sit upon, asked him the reason of it: because, reply'd Shakespear, I will have no man that comes here drink any longer than he can stand.

Shakespear being told by a gentleman that players were idle fellows; you are mistaken, says our wag, for their whole life is full of action.

A pert coxcomb in company with Shakespear, rising from his chair, said saucily, know, Mr. Wag, I set up for a wit. Oh, do you so, says Shakespear, then take my advice and sit down again.

Shakespear's Jests, or, the Jubilee Jester, 8vo. [1769.]

Another tradition must be noticed, as one of the few that are still current at Stratford. It was credited by the elder Ireland, who has given us a representation of Shakespeare's crab-tree, a supposititious relic now departed, and not worthy of being perpetuated.

Amongst the many juvenile levities of Shakspeare, I cannot omit delineating some other traits of his character; tradition says that he loved hearty draughts of English beer or ale, and that there were then two companies of people who usually met at a village called Bidford, about seven miles below Stratford, upon the banks of the Avon, who distinguished themselves by the appellations of the topers and sippers, the former of whom were accounted the most eminent in the science of drinking the largest quantity of liquor without being intoxicated; yet the latter were also very powerful, and looked on themselves superior to most other companies of drinkers in this country. These sons of Bacchus challenged all the men in England to drink with them, to try the strength of their heads; the Stratford bard and his companions accepted it, and repaired to Bidford on a Whitsun Monday to make a trial with the topers, but, to their disappointment, they discovered that they were gone to Evesham Fair upon a like excursion; so the Stratfordians with Shakspeare were obliged to take up with the sippers, who they scoffed at as unworthy the contest; but upon trial they found themselves very inferior to their opponents, and were at last obliged to own their superiority, for the poet and his companions got so intoxicated, that they were obliged to decline any further trial; and, leaving Bidford, they proceeded homeward; but poor William, when he came about half a mile from the village, unable to go on, laid himself down upon the verdant turf, beneath the umbrageous boughs of a wide spreading crab-tree, where he took his night's repose; the lark's early matins awaked him, and he was invited to return to Bidford by some of his convivial companions to renew the contest, but he refused; says he, I have drank with

Piping Pebworth, Dancing Marston,
Haunted Hillborough, and hungry Grafton,
With Dadging Exhall, Papist Wixford,
Beggarly Broom, and Drunken Bidford.

These lines seem to intimate that the opponents consisted of a motley group selected from the above villages; Pebworth is still celebrated for the skill of its inhabitants in music and rural festivity; and Long Marston, or Marston Sicca (as it is commonly wrote), the inhabitants of which are noted for their activity in country dances; and Hillborough is a lonely hamlet, said by the tradition of the vicinage to have been haunted by spirits and fairies: Hungry Grafton, I suppose, received that appellation from the barrenness of its soil; but, however that may be, the produce of its excellent stone quarries make sufficient amends for the

sterility of the land. Dadging Exhall,—I must confess I am at a loss how to account for the appellation of Dadging; but Papist Wixford is a village belonging to the Throckmorton family, and the tenants are most of them of the Roman Catholick religion. Beggarly Broom must have been so called from the badness of the soil; and drunken Bidford still deserves the name, for though it is but a small village, there are five public houses in it, and the people love ale as well as they did in the days of Shakspeare. Of this I am certain, from my own observations, having resided amongst them above half a year.

It has been erroneously stated that an epigram in Cokain's 'Small Poems,' 1658, p. 124, exhibits Shakespeare's fondness for deep potations; but nothing of the kind can properly be gathered from it. The epigram is, however, very curious, referring to a provincial town mentioned in the Induction to the Taming of the Shrew, and showing how Shakespeare's local allusions were treasured in those days.

To Mr. Clement Fisher of Wincott.

Shakspeare your Wincot ale hath much renownd,
That foxd a beggar so (by chance was found
Sleeping) that there needed not many a word
To make him to believe he was a lord:
But you affirm, and in it seem most eager,
'Twill make a lord as drunk as any beggar.
Did Norton brew such ale as Shakspeare fancies
Did put Kit Sly into such lordly trances?
And let us meet there for a fit of gladness,
And drink ourselves merry in sober sadness.

No record of the sale of Shakespeare's interest in the Globe and Blackfriars theatres has yet been discovered, but it is presumed he parted with them before his death, for they are not mentioned in his will. It has been well conjectured by Mr. Knight that a tenement in the Blackfriars, purchased by the poet in 1613, had reference to some object connected with his theatrical property. In March, 1612-3, Shakespeare bought a house in the Blackfriars from Henry Walker, "abutting upon a street leading down to Puddle

Wharf, on the East part, right against the King's Majesty's Wardrobe." This house had been purchased by Walker in October, 1604, from Mathew Bacon, of Gray's Inn. The sum to be paid by Shakespeare for it was £140, but it appears that he paid down only £80 of the purchase-money, and mortgaged the premises for the remainder. It has been somewhat too hastily inferred from this circumstance that Shakespeare was not in a position to furnish the whole sum, but we may more reasonably conclude the transaction had reference to circumstances not now known.* When he had paid off the whole of the purchase-money, he made a lease for a term of years to John Robinson, and a house near St. Andrew's church is still pointed out as having been the property of the great dramatist. Singularly enough, with a trifling exception, the house seems to have been tenanted by the Robinson family till within the last few years; but one John Robinson,

John Robinson's Tenement.

* Mr. Collier ingeniously conjectures that the purchase was made in some way as an accommodation to Heminge and the two other persons joined in the mortgage trust, and this opinion is very likely to be correct, for it is difficult to account in any other manner for Shakespeare's making Heminge a trustee. Heminge did not execute the deed of conveyance, although he is a party named in it, and the estate would have descended in the way directed by Shakespeare's will without the declaration of trust.

the last of the race, appears to have been unfortunate, and has now resigned his residence to the use of others. At the time of the Gordon riots it was a blacksmith's shop, and the John Robinson of the day had the honour of releasing the shackles from some of the prisoners liberated from the Fleet. So much for the history of the only property in the metropolis that is clearly ascertained to have belonged to Shakespeare.

The counterpart of the original conveyance of the house to Shakespeare is still in existence, and is now preserved in the library of the corporation of the city of London at Guildhall. A very careful copy of it is here given from the original, which possesses great interest as containing one of the very few genuine autographs of the poet that have descended to modern times. A fac-simile of this signature, recently made with the greatest care by Mr. Fairholt, is appended to our transcript. I have also added copies of the mortgage-deed, and the surrender of the trust by Heminge and his co-trustees in 1618, which will furnish the reader with the whole of the particulars relating to this purchase, as far as they are at present known.

[Indenture of Conveyance, 10 March, 1612-3.]

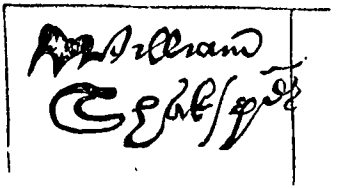
This Indenture made the tenthe day of Marche, in the yeare of our Lord God according to the computacion of the church of England one thowsand six hundred and twelve, and in the yeares of the reigne of our sovereigne Lord James, by the grace of God king of England, Scotland, ffraunce, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. that is to saie, of England, ffraunce and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the six and fortith, Betweene Henry Walker citizein and minstrell of London of thone partie, and William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon in the countie of Warwick gentleman, William Johnson citizein and vintener of London, John Jackson and John Hemmyng of London gentlemen, on thother partie; Witnesseth, that the said Henry Walker, for and in consideracion of the somme of one hundred and fortie poundes of lawfull money of England to him in hande before thensealing hereof by the said William Shakespeare well and trulie paid, whereof and wherewith hee the said Henry Walker doth acknowledge himselfe fullie satisfied and contented, and thereof and of every part and parcell thereof doth clearlie acquite and discharge the saide William

Shakespeare, his heires, executours, administratours, and assignes, and every of them, by theis presents hath bargayned and soulde, and by theis presents doth fullie clerlie and absolutlie bargayne and sell unto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemmyng, their heires and assignes for ever, all that dwelling house or tenement with thappurtenaunces situate and being within the precinct, circuit and compasse of the late Blackffryers, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner esquior, and since that in the tenure of John ffortescue gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupacion of one William Ireland or of his assignee or assignes, abutting upon a streete leading downe to Pudle Wharffe on the East part, right against the Kinges Majesties Wardrobe; part of which said tenement is erected over a great gate leading to a capitall mesuage which sometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell esquior deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupacion of the right Honorable Henry now Earle of Northumberland; and also all that plott of ground on the West side of the same tenement, which was lately inclosed with boordes on two sides thereof by Anne Bacon, widowe, soe farre and in such sorte as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Bacon, and not otherwise; and being on the thirde side inclosed with an olde brick wall; which said plott of ground was sometyme parcell and taken out of a great peece of voyde ground lately used for a garden; and also the soyle whereuppon the said tenement standeth, and also the said brick wall and boordes which doe inclose the said plott of ground; with free entrie, accesse, ingresse, egresse, and regresse, in by and through the said greate gate and yarde thereunto the usuall dore of the said tenement; and also all and singuler cellours, sollers, romes, lightes, easiamentes, profittes, commodities, and hereditamentes whatsoever, to the said dwelling house or tenement belonging or in any wise apperteyning; and the reversion and reversions whatsoever of all and singuler the premisses, and of every parcell thereof; and also all rentes and yearlie profittes whatsoever reserved and from hensforth to growe due and paiable upon whatsoever lease, dimise or graunt, leases, dimises, or grauntes, made of the premisses or of any parcell thereof; and also all the state, right, title, interest, propertie, use, possession, clayme, and demaunde whatsoever, which hee the said Henry Walker now hath, or of right may, might, should, or ought to have, of in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof; and also all and every the deedes, evidences, charters, escriptes, minimentes, and writinges whatsoever, which hee the said Henry Walker now hath, or any other person or persons to his use have or hath, or which hee may lawfullie come by without suite in the lawe, which touch or concerne the premisses onlie, or onlie any part or parcell thereof, togeither with the true coppies of all such deedes, evidences, and writinges as concerne the premisses (amounges other thinges), to bee written and taken out at the onlie costes and charges of the said William Shakespeare, his heires or assignes; which said dwelling house or tenement, and other the premisses above by theis presents mencioned to bee bargayned and soulde, the said Henry Walker late purchased and had to him, his heires and assignes, for ever, of Mathie Bacon of Graies Inne in the countie of Middlesex gentleman, by indenture bearing date the fifteenth

day of October in the yeare of our Lord God one thowsand six hundred and fower, and in the yeares of the reigne of our said sovereigne lord king James of his realmes of England ffraunce and Ireland the second, and of Scotland the eight and thirtith: To have and to holde the said dwelling house or tenement, shopps, cellours, sollers, plott of ground, and all and singuler other the premisses above by theis presentes mencioned to bee bargayned and soulde, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunces, unto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemmyng, their heires and assignes for ever, to thonlie and proper use and behoofe of the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, their heires and assignes for ever. And the said Henry Walker, for himselfe, his heires, executours, administratours, and assignes, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promisse and graunt to and with the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, by theis presentes, in forme following, that is to saie, that hee the said Henry Walker, his heires, executours, administratours, or assignes, shall and will cleerlie acquite, exonerate, and discharge, or otherwise from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter well and sufficientlie save and keepe harmles, the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes and every of them, of for and concernyng the bargayne and sale of the premisses, and the said bargayned premisses and every part and parcell thereof with thappurtenaunces, of and from all and al manner of former bargaynes, sales, guiftes, grauntes, leases, statutes, recognizaunces, joyntures, dowers, intailes, lymittacion and lymittacions of use and uses, extentes, judgmentes, execucions, annuities, and of and from all and every other charges, titles, and incumbraunces whatsoever, wittinglie and wilfullie had, made, committed, suffered, or donne by him the said Henrye Walker, or any other under his authoritie or right, before thensealing and deliverye of theis presents, except the rentes and services to the cheefe lord or lordes of the fee or fees of the premisses from hensforth, for or in respecte of his or their seigniorie or seigniories onlie to bee due and donne.* And further the saide Henry Walker, for himselfe, his heires, executours, and administratours, and for every of them, doth covenaunt promisse and graunt to and with the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, by theis presentes in forme following, that is to saie, that for and notwithstanding any acte or thing donne by him the said Henry Walker to the contrarye, hee the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, shall or lawfullie maye peaceablie and quietlie have, holde, occupie and enjoye the said dwelling house or tenement, cellours, sollers, and all and singuler other the premisses above by theis presentes mencioned to bee bargayned and soulde, and every part and parcell thereof with thappurtenaunces, and the rentes, yssues, and profittes thereof, and of every part and parcell thereof, to his and their owne use receave perceave take and enjoye from hensforth for ever without the lett, troble, eviccion or interruncion of the said Henry Walker, his heires, executours or administratours or any of them, or of or by any other person or persons which have, or may before

* A few lines in the original document have here been carefully erased.

the date hereof pretende to have, any lawfull estate, righte, title, use, or interest, in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof, by from or under him the said Henry Walker. And also that hee, the said Henry Walker, and his heires, and all and every other person and persons and their heires, which have or that shall lawfullie and rightfullie have or clayme to have any lawfull and rightfull estate, right, title, or interest, in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof, by from or under the said Henry Walker, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes from hensforth, for and during the space of three yeares now next ensuing, at or upon the reasonable request and costes and charges in the lawe of the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, doe make knowledge and suffer to bee donne made and knowledgede all and every such further lawfull and reasonable acte and actes, thing and thinges, devise and devises in the law whatsoever, for the conveying of the premises, bee it by deed or deedes inrolled or not inrolled, inrolment of theis presentes, fyne, feoffament, recoverye, release, confirmacion, or otherwise, with warrantie of the said Henry Walker and his heires against him the said Henry Walker and his heires onlie, or otherwise without warrantie, or by all any or as many of the wayes, meanes, and devises aforesaid, as by the said William Shakespeare, his heires or assignes, or his or their councell learned in the lawe shalbee reasonablie devised or advised, ffor the further, better, and more perfect assurance, suertie, suermaking and conveying of all and singuler the premisses, and every parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunces, unto the saide William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, for ever, to th'use and in forme aforesaid; And further that all and every fyne and fynes to bee levyed, recoveryes to bee suffered, estates and assurances at any tyme or tymes hereafter to bee had made, executed or passed by or betweene the said parties of the premisses, or of any parcell thereof, shalbee, and shalbee esteemed, adjudged, deemed, and taken to bee, to thonlie and proper use and behoofe of the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, for ever, and to none other use, intent, or purpose. In witnesse whereof the said parties to theis indentures interchaungablie have sett their seales. Yeoven the day and yeares first above written.



Wm. Johnsonn. Jo. Jacksonn.

Sealed and delivered by the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, and John Jackson, in the presence of Will Atkinson.*

Ed. Overy.
Robert Andrewes Scr.
Henry Lawrence, servant to the same scr.

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* This witness was clerk to the Brewer's Company, and Mr. Vines has confirmed the authenticity of this autograph by a reference to others attached to deeds executed about the same period. If the present document requires any

[Mortgage made by Shakespeare, 11 March, 1612-3.]

This Indenture made the eleventh day of March, in the yeares of the reigne of our Soveraigne Lorde James, by the grace of God, king of England, Scotland, Fraunce, and Ireland, defender of the Faith &c. that is to say, of England, Fraunce and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the six and fortieth, Between William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon in the countie of Warwick, gentleman, William Johnson, citizen and vintener of London, John Jackson, and John Hemyng of London, gentleman, of thone partie, and Henry Walker, citizen and minstrell of London, of thother partie: Witnesseth, that the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, have demised, graunted and to ferme letten, and by theis presentes do demise, graunt, and to ferme lett unto the said Henry Walker, all that dwelling house or tenement, with thappurtenaunces, situate and being within the precinct, circuit and compasse of the late Black ffryers, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner, esquire, and since that in the tenure of John Fortescue, gent., and now or late being in the tenure or occupation of one William Ireland, or of his assignee or assignees, abutting upon a streete leading downe to Puddle Wharfe, on the East part, right against the Kings Majesties Wardrobe; part of which said tenement is erected over a greate gate leading to a capitall messuage, which sometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell, esquire, deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupation of the right honourable Henry now Earle of Northumberlande: and also all that plott of ground on the West side of the said tenement, which was lately inclosed with boords on two sides thereof, by Anne Bacon, widow, so farre and in such sorte as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Bacon, and not otherwise, and being on the third side inclosed with an old brick wall; which said plott of ground was sometyme parcell and taken out of a great voyde peece of ground lately used for a garden; and also the soyle whereupon the said tenement standeth, and also the said brick wall and boords which doe inclose the said plott of ground, with free entrie, accesse, ingresse, and regresse, in, by, and through, the said great gate and yarde there, unto the usual dore of the said tenement, and also all and singular cellors, sollers, romes, lights, easiamentes, profittes, commodities, and appurtenaunces whatsoever to the said dwelling-house or tenement belonging or in any wise apperteyning: to have and to holde the said dwelling-house or tenement, cellers, sollers, romes, plott of ground, and all and singular other the premisses above by theis presentes mentioned to bee demised, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunces, unto the said Henry Walker, his executours, administratours, and assignes, from the feast of thannunciacion of the blessed Virgin Marye next coming after the date hereof, unto thende and terme of one

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testimony to its genuineness, it may be as well to state that it may be seen enrolled word for word in the Close Rolls 11 Jac. I. 31 pars. at the Rolls Chapel,—"et memorandum quod undecimo die Marcii anno suprascript. præfat. Henricus Walker venit coram dicto domino rege in cancellar. sua, et recogn. indentur. prædict. ac omnia et singula in eadem content. et specificat. in forma supradicta."

hundred yeares from thence next ensuing, and fullie to be compleat and ended, withoute impeachment of or for any manner of waste: yelding and paying therefore yearlie during the said terme unto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, their heires and assignes, a pepper corne at the feast of Easter yearly, yf the same be lawfullie demaunded, and noe more; provided alwayes, that if the said William Shakespeare, his heires, executours, administratours, or assignes, or any of them, doe well and truelie paie or cause to be paid to the said Henry Walker, his executours, administratours or assignes, the sum of threescore pounds of lawfull money of England, in and upon the nyne and twentieth day of September next coming after the date hereof, at, or in, the nowe dwelling-house of the said Henry Walker, situate and being in the parish of Saint Martyn near Ludgate, of London, at one entier payment without delaie, that then and from thenesforth this presente lease, demise and graunt, and all and every matter and thing herein conteyned (other then this provisoe) shall cease, determine, and bee utterlie voyde, frustrate, and of none effect, as though the same had never beene had ne made, theis presentes or any thing therein conteyned to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And the said William Shakespeare, for himselfe, his heires, executours, and administratours, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promisse and graunt to and with the said Henry Walker, his executours, administratours, and assignes, and everie of them, by theis presentes, that he the said William Shakespeare, his heires, executours, administratours or assignes, shall and will clearlie acquite, exonerate, and discharge, or from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, well and sufficientlie save and keepe harmless the said Henry Walker, his executours, administratours, and assignes, and every of them, and the said premisses by theis presentes demised, and every parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunces, of and from all and al manner of former and other bargaynes, sales, guiftes, grauntes, leases, jointures, dowers, intailes, statuts, recognizaunces, judgmentes, executions, and of and from all and every other charge, titles, troubles, and incumbrances whatsoever by the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, or any of them, or by their or any of their meanes, had, made, committed or done, before thensealing and delivery of theis presentes, or hereafter before the said nyne and twentieth day of September next comming after the date hereof, to bee had, made, committed or done, except the rentes and services to the cheef lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premisses, for or in respect of his or their segnorie or seignories onlie, to bee due and done.

In witnesse whereof the said parties to theis indentures interchangeablie have sett their seales. Yeoven the day and years first above written.

Wm. Shakspere. Wm. Johnson. Jo. Jackson.

Enscaled and delivered by the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson and John Jackson, in the presence of

Will. Atkinson. Robert Andrews scr.
Ed. Overy. Henry Lawrence, servant to the said scr.

[Declaration of Trust, 10 Feb. 1617-18.]

This Indenture, made the tenth day of ffebruary in the yeres of the reigne of our sovereigne Lord James, by the grace of God kinge of England, Scotland, ffraunce and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. that is to say, of England, ffraunce, and Ireland, the fifteenth, and of Scotland the one and fiftith; Between John Jackson and John Hemynge of London, gentlemen, and William Johnson, citizen and wintiner of London, of thone part, and John Greene of Clements Inn in the County of Midd. gent. and Matthew Morryes of Stretford upon Avon in the County of Warwick gent. of thother part; Witnesseth, that the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, as well for and in performance of the confidence and trust in them reposed by William Shakespeare, deceased, late of Stretford aforesaid, gent., and to thend and intent that the lands tenem^{ts} and hereditam^{ts} hereafter in theis presents mencioned and expressed, may be conveyed and assured according to the true intent and meaning of the last will and testam^{t} of the said William Shakespeare, and for the some of ffyve shillings of lawfull money of England to them payd, for and on behalf of Susanna Hall, one of the daughters of the said William Shakespeare, and now wife of John Hall of Stretford aforesaid gent. before thensealling and delivery of theis presents, Have aliened bargained sold and confirmed, and by theis presents doe and every of them doth fully cleerely and absolutely alien bargaine sell and confirme unto the said John Greene and Matthew Morry, their heires and assignes for ever, All that dwelling house or tenem^{t} with thappurtenaunces scituat and being within the precinct, circuite, and compase of the late Black-frieres, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner esquier, and since that in the tenure of John ffortescue gent. and, now* or late being in the tenure or occupacion of one William Ireland or of his assignee or assignes, abutting upon a street leadinge downe to Puddle Wharfe, on the east part, right against the kings Ma^{ts} warderobe, part of which tenem^{t} is erected over a great gate leading to a capitall messuage which sometymes was in the tenure of William Blackwell esquier deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupacion of the right Hono^{rble} Henry Earle of Northumberland, and also all that plot of ground on the west side of the said tenem^{t}, which was lately inclosed with boords on twoe sides thereof by Anne Bacon widdow, soe farr and in such sort as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Bacon, and not otherwise; and being on the third side inclosed with an ould brick wall; which said plot of ground was sometymes parcell and taken out of a great peece of voyd ground lately used for a garden; and also the soyle whereupon the said tenem^{t} standeth; and also the said brick wall and boords which doe inclose the said plot of ground, with free entry, accesse, ingres, egres, and regres, in by and through the said great gate and yarde there unto the usuall dore of the said tenem^{t}; and also all and singuler

* These words are merely copied from Walker's Conveyance to Shakspeare in March 1612-13. From a subsequent part of this deed it appears that John Robinson was now the tenant in possession, under a lease made to him by Shakspeare for a term of years.—*Malone.*

cellers sollars roomes lights easem^ts^ profitts comodyties and hereditam^ts^ whatsoever to the said dwelling house or tenem^t^ belonging or in any wise appertayning, and the reversion and reversions whatsoever of all and singuler the premisses and of every parcell thereof; and also all rents and yerely profitts whatsoever reserved and from henceforth to grow due and payable upon whatsoever lease demisse or graunt, leases demises or graunts, made of the premisses or any parcell thereof; and also all thestate, right, title, interest, property, use, clayme, and demaund whatsoever, which they the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, now have or any of them hath or of right may, might, shoold, or ought to have in the premises: To have and to holde the said dwelling howse or tenem^t^, lights, cellers, sollers, plot of ground, and all and singuler other the premisses above by theis presents mencioned to be bargained and sold, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunces, unto the said John Green and Mathew Morrys their heires and assignes for ever, to the use and behoofes hereafter in theis presents declared mencioned expressed and lymitted, and to none other use, behoofe, intent, or purpose: That is to say, to the use and behoofe of the aforesaid Susanna Hall for and during the terme of her naturall life, and after her deceas to the use and behoofe of the first sonne of her body lawfully yssueing, and of the heires males of the body of the said first sonne lawfully yssueing; and for the want of such heires to the use and behoofe of the second sonne of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and of the heires males of the body of the said second sonne lawfully yssueing; and for want of such heires to the use of the third sonne of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and of the heires males of the body of the said third son lawfully yssueing; and for want of such heires, to the use and behoofe of the fowerth, fiveth, sixt, and seaventh sonnes of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and of the severall heirs males of the severall bodyes of the said fowerth, fiveth, sixt, and seaventh sonnes, lawfully yssueing, in such manner as it is before lymitted to be and remeyne to the first, second, and third sonnes of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and to their heires males as aforesaid; and for default of such heires, to the use and behoofe of Elizabeth Hall daughter of the said Susanna Hall, and of the heires males of her body lawfully yssueing; and for default of such heires, to the use and behoofe of Judyth Quiney now wife of Thomas Quiney of Stretford aforesaid vintner, one other of the daughters of the said William Shakespeare, and of the heires males of the body of the said Judyth lawfully yssueing; and for default of such yssue, to the use and behoofe of the right heires of the said William Shakespeare for ever. And the said John Jackson, for himself, his heires, executors, administrators and assignes, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Green and Mathew Morrys and either of them, their or either of their heires and assignes, by theis presents, that he the said John Jackson, his heires, executors, administrators or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter within convenient tyme after every reasonable request to him or them made, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmles the said bargained premisses, and every part and parcell thereof, of and from all

and all manner of former bargaines, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statuts, recognizaunces, joynctures, dowers, intayles, uses, extents, judgem^{ts}, execucions, annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombraunces whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had, made, comitted, or done by him the said John Jackson alone, or joynctly with any other person or persons whatsoever; except the rente and services to the cheiffe lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due, and of right accustomed to be done, and except one lease and demise of the premisses with thappurtenaunces heretofore made by the said William Shakespeare, together with them the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, unto one John Robinson, now tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and unexpired, as by the same whereunto relacion be had at large doth appeare. And the said John Hemynge, for himself, his heires, executors, admistrators, and assignes, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Greene and Mathew Morrys, and either of them, their and either of their heires and assignes, by theis presents, that he the said John Hemynge, his heires, executors, admistrators, or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter, within convenient tyme after every reasonable request, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmles the said bargained premisses, and every part and parcell thereof, of and from all and all manner of former bargaines, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statuts, recognizaunces, joynctures, dowers, intayles, uses, extents, judgm^{ts}, execucions, annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombraunces whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had, made, comitted, or done by him the said John Hemynge alone, or joynctly with any other person or persons whatsoever, except the rentes and serviee to the chieffe lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due and of right accustomed to be done, and except one lease and demise of the premisses with thappurtenaunces heretofore made by the said William Shakespeare, together with them the said John Jackson, John Hemyng and William Johnson, unto one John Robinson, now tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and unexpired, as by the same whereunto relacion be had at large doth appeare. And the said William Johnson, for himself, his heires, executors, administ^{ors} and assignes, and for every of them, doth covenaunt, promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Green and Mathew Morryes, and either of them, their and either of their heires and assignes, by theis presents, that he the said William Johnson, his heires, executors, admi^{strs} or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter within convenient tyme after every reasonable request, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmles the said bargained premisses, and every part and parcell thereof, of and from all and all manner of former bargaines, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statutes, recognizaunces, joynctures, dowers, intayles, uses, extents, judgements, execucions, annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombraunces whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had made comitted or done by him the said William Johnson alone, or joyntly with any other person or persons whatsoever, except the rents and service to the cheiff lord or lords

of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due and of right accustomed to be done, and except one lease and demise of the premisses with thappurtenaunces heretofore made by the said William Shakespeare, together with them the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, unto one John Robinson, now tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and unexpired, as by the same whereunto relation be had at large doth appeare. In witnes whereof the parties aforesaid to theis presente indentures have interchaungeably sett their hands and sealls. Yeoven the day and yeres first above written, 1617.

Jo. Jackson. John Heminges. Wm. Johnson.

Sealed and delyvered by the within named John Jackson

in the presence of

Roc. Swale.
John Prise.

Sealed and delyvered by the withinamed William Johnson in the presence of

Nickolas Harysone.
John Prise.

Sealed and delyvered by the withinamed John Hemynges in the presence of

Matt^{y} Benson.
John Prise.

Memorand. that the xj.th day of ffebruarye in the yeres within written, John Robinson, tenant of the premysses withinmencioned, did geve and delyver unto John Greene withinnamed to the use of Susanna Hall withinnamed five pence of lawfull money of England in name of Attornment in the presence of

Matt. Benson.
John Prise.
by me Richarde Tylor.

Not very long before Shakespeare purchased this tenement in the Blackfriars, he was engaged in a lawsuit respecting the share in the tithes he had bought in, 1605. The following draft of a bill to be filed before Lord Ellesmere informs us that some of the lessees refusing to contribute their proper shares of a reserved rent, a greater proportion than was right fell to Lane, Greene, and Shakespeare. The

result of the suit is not stated, but the draft is important, as declaring the exact value of Shakespeare's income derived from these tithes.

In Canc. bill, Richard Lane et al. quer., Dominus Carewe et al. deff.

To the Right Honorable Thomas Lord Ellesmere, lord Chauncellour of England.

In humble wise complaininge, shewe unto your honorable good Lordshipp your dayly oratours Richard Lane of Awston in the cownty of Warwicke esquire, Thomas Greene of Stratford uppon Avon in the said county of Warwicke esquire, and William Shackspeare of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid in the said county of Warwicke gentleman, that whereas Anthonie Barker clarke, late warden of the late dissolved Colledge of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid in the said county of Warwicke, and Gyles Coventrey late subwarden of the same colledge, and the chapter of the said colledge, were heretofore seised in their demesne as of fee in the right of the said colledge, of and in divers messuages, lands, tenements, and glebe lands, scituate, lyeinge, and beinge within the parishe of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, and of and in the tythes of corne, grayne, and haye, and of and in all, and all manner of tythes of wooll, lambe, and all other small and pryvye tythes and oblacions and alterages whatsoever, cominge groweinge aryseinge reneweinge or happeninge within the whole parishe of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, And beinge soe thereof seised by their indenture beareinge date in or about the seaventh day of September in the six and thirtyth yeare of the raigne of our late soveraigne lord of ffamous memory Kinge Henry the Eight sealed with their chapter seale, they did demise, graunte and to fferme lett (amongst divers mannors, and other messuages lands tenements and hereditaments) unto one William Barker, gentleman, nowe deceassed, the aforesaid messuages, tenements, and glebe lands, scituate, lyeinge, and beinge within the said parishe of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, And the aforesaid tythes of corne grayne and hay, and all and all manner other the said tythes of wooll, lambe, and smale and pryvie tythes, oblacions and alterages whatsoever; To have and to hould from the feast of Ste. Michaell tharchangell then last past, for and duringe the terme of ffourescore and twelve yeares thence next and immediatly followeinge, and fully to be compleate and ended, By vertue of which demise the said William Barker entred into the said demised premisses, and was thereof possessed for all the said terme of yeares,* and being soe thereof possessed of such estate, terme, and interest, the said estate, terme, and interest of the said William Barker, by some sufficient meanes in the law afterwards,† came unto one John Barker, gent., by vertue whereof the said John Barker entred into the

* Here is inserted "herein to come and not expired," but afterwards erased.

† This sentence is interlined.

same premisses soe demised to the said William Barker, and was thereof possessed for and duringe the residue of the sayd terme of yeares then to come and not expired, and being soe thereof possessed, he the said John Barker in or aboute the xxij.th yeare of the raigne of our late soveraigne lady Queene Elizabeth, by sufficient assureance and conveyance in the lawe, did assigne assure and convey over unto Sir John Huband knight, synce deceassed, the said messuages, lands, tenements and glebe lands, scituate lyeinge and beinge within the said parishe of Stratford uppon Avon, and all and singular the tythes before specified, and all his estate, right, tytle and interest and terme of yeares of and in the same: To have and to hould for and dureinge all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares then to come and not expired, reservinge uppon and by the said assureance and conveyance the annuall or yearely rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* of lawfull money of England at the ffeasts of Ste. Michaell tharchangell and thannunciacion of our blessed lady Ste. Mary the Virgin, by even and equall porcions, In and by which said assureance and conveyance (as one Henry Barker gent. executour of the last will and testamente of the said John Barker, or administratour of his goods and chatteles, or otherwise assignee of the said rente from the said John Barker, hath divers and sundry tymes given forth; and of which, yf the said rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* or anie parte thereof shall happe at anie tyme to be unpaid, the tenaunts of the said premisses as he sayeth shall find) there was, by some sufficiente meanes, good and sufficiente provision causion and securyty hadd and made, that yf the said annuell or yearely rentes or any parte thereof, should be behind and unpaid in parte or in all after eyther of the said ffeaste dayes wherein the same ought to be paid by the space of fforty dayes, beinge lawfully demaunded at the porch of the parishe churche of Stratford aforesaid, That then yt should and might be lawfull to and for the said William Barber his executours administratours and assignes, into all and singuler the said messuages, lands, tenements, glebe lands and tythes, and other the premisses soe assured and assigned unto the said Sir John Huband, to enter, and the same to have again repossesse and enjoy as in his or their former estate; By vertue of which said assignemente assureance and conveyance soe made to the said Sir John Huband, he the said Sir John Huband entred into all and singuler the same premisses soe assigned unto him, and was thereof possessed for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares then to come, and not expired, under the condicion aforesaid, and subjecte to the forfeyture of all the said terme to him assured and conveyed, yf defaulte of paymente of the aforesaid rente xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* happened to be made contrary to the true entente and meaninge of the said provision and security in and uppon the same assureance soe hadd and made: And whereas sythence the said assureance and conveyance soe made to the said Sir John Huband, all the said assigned premisses are of divers and sundry parcells and by divers and sundry severall sufficiente meane assignements and under estats deryved under the said assurances and conveyance soe made unto the said Sir John Huband, for very great summes of money and valuable consideracions, come unto and nowe remayne in your said oratours, and other the persons hereafter in theis presents named, and they have

severall estats of and in the same parcells, as followeth; That is to saie, your oratour Richard Lane an estate or interest for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of and in the tythes of corne and grayne of and in the barony of Clopton, and the village of Shottery, being of and within the parishe of Stratford uppon Avon, of the yearely value of lxxx.*li.* and of and in divers messuages lands tenementes and other hereditaments in Shottery aforesaid and Drayton, within the said parishe of Stratford uppon Avon, of the yearely value of x.*li.* by the yeare; and your oratour Thomas Greene an estate or interest for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of and in one messuage with thappurtenaunces in Old Stratford of the yearely value of three pownds; and your oratour William Shackspeare hath an estate and interest of and in the moyty or one half of all tythes of corne and grayne aryseinge within the townes villages and ffields, and of and in the moity or half of all tythes of wool and lambs, and of all small and privy tythes, oblacions, and alterages arisinge or increasing in Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcome, being in the said parishe of Stratford, or within the wholl parishe of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, for and during all the residue of the said terme, beinge of the yearely value of threescore pownds; and the right honorable Sir George Carewe knight, Lord Carewe of Clopton, hath an estate and interest for the terme of nyneteene yeares or thereabouts yet to come of and in the tythes of corne grayne and hay aryseinge in the village and fields of Bridgetowne in the said parishe of Stratford uppon Avon of the value of xx.*li.*, and your oratour the said Richard Lane an estate of and in the same, in reversion thereof, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares then to come and not expired; and Sir Edward Grevill knight the reversion of one messuage at Stratford aforesaid, after the estate of one John Lupton therein determined, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares, beinge of the yearely value of fforty shillings or thereabouts; and Sir Edward Conway, knight, hath an estate and interest for and duringe the residue of the said terme of and in* the tythes of corne grayne and haye of Loddington, another village of and within the said parishe of Stratford uppon Avon, of the yearely value of xxx.*li.*† and Mary Combe widowe and William Combe gent. and John Combe gent. or some or one of them an estate for the terme of sixe yeares or thereabouts yet to come of and in the other moyty or half of the tythes of corne and grayne aryseinge within the townes villages and ffields of Old Stratford aforesaid, and Bishopton and Welcombe in the said parishe of Stratford, and of and in the moyty or half of all tythes of wooll and lambe and of all small and pryvy tythes oblacions and alterages ariseinge or encreasinge in or within the wholl parishe of Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of lx.*li.* (and of and in the tythes of corn, grayne and hay of Ryon Clifford, within the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of x.*li.*); and the said Thomas

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* "The glebe lands in Luddington and," inserted here, and afterwards erased.

† "There hath bene xxx.*li.* given for Luddington tythes," marginal note, scored out, probably, when the value was inserted in the body of the document.

Greene an estate of and in the reversion of the same moyty of all the same tythes of corne and grayne, and wooll and lambe, and small and privie tythes, oblacions and alterages, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of ffoure-score and twelve yeares which after the ffeast day of thannunciacion of our blessed lady Ste. Mary the Virgin which shalbe in the yeare of our Lord God 1613 shalbe to come and unexpired, and John Nashe gent. an estate of and in the tythes of corne, grayne, and haie aryseinge within the village and fields of Drayton within the parish of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of xx. marks for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares. [and Anthonie Nashe gent. an estate for divers yeares yet to come of and in the other moyty or half of all the said tythes of wool and lambe and smale and pryvie tythes, oblacions, and alterages, of the yearly value of xx.*li.* and Anne Huband widowe an estate in the same moytye for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares then to come and not expired*]; and John Lane gent. an estate for and duringe all the residue of the said terme, of and in one hereditamente in Stratford aforesaid, heretofore called Byddles Barne, lately made and converted into divers and sundry tenements or dwellinge howses, and divers other messuages or tenements, of the yearely value of viij.*li.* or thereabouts; and Anthonie Nashe an estate of and in one messuage or tenemente in Bridgstreete in Stratford aforesaid of the yearely value of ffoure pownds, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of yeares yet to come; the said William Combe and Mary Combe widowe, mother of the said William, or one of them, an estate of and in divers cottages and gardens in Stratford, and of and in ffyve leyes of pasture in Ryen-Clifford in the said parishe of Stratford, and of and in certayne lands or leyes in their or one of their closse or enclosure called Ste. Hill in the same parishe, of the yearely value of ffyve pownds or thereabouts, for and during all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; the said John Combe an estate of and in . . . . . of the yearely value of . . . . . for and during all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Thomas Barber gent. an estate of and in . . . . . of the yearely value of . . . . . for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares†; Daniell Baker gent. an estate of and in the tythes of Shottery meadowe and Broad Meadowe within the said parishe, of the yearely value of xx.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; John Smyth gent. an estate of and in divers messuages, tenements, barnes, and gardens in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of viij.*li.* by the yeare, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Frauncis Smyth the younger gent. an estate of and in two barnes and divers messuages and tenements with the appurtenaunces in the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of xij.*li.*, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of

* The sentence within brackets is cancelled.
† This passage is marked for omission.

lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; William Walford draper an estate of and in two messuages or tenements lyinge and beinge in the Chappell Streete in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of xl.*s.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; William Courte gent. an estate of and in two messuages or tenements in the Chappell streete in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of iij.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; John Browne gent. an estate of and in one messuage in Bridge streete aforesaid, in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of iiij.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the same terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Christopher Smyth of Willmecott an estate of and in one messuage with the appurtenaunces in Henley Street in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid, of the yearely value of iiij.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Thomas Jakeman* an estate of and in one yard land in Shottery aforesaid in the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of x.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; and Richard Kempson of Bynton one yard land and a halfe in Bynton of the yearely value of eight pounds for and during all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Stephen Burman an estate of and in one yard land and a half in Shotterey aforesaid in the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of xv.*li.*, for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and not expired; Thomas Burman an estate of and in half a yard land in Shottery in the parishe of Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of v.*li.* for and dureinge all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and not expired; and William Burman and the said Thomas Burman, executors of the last will and testament of one Stephen Burman late deceassed, an estate of and in one tenemente in Church Streete in Stratford aforesaid, of the yearely value of iij.*li.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and unexpired; Thomas Horneby an estate of and in the messuage wherein he nowe dwelleth in Stratford uppon Avon aforesaid by the yearely value of iij.*li.* x.*s.* for and duringe all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares yet to come and not expired; Thomas Hamond, John ffifield, William Smarte, Thomas Aynge, Thomas Holmes, Edward Ingram, Richard Ingram, Thomas Bucke, Thomas Gryffin, Edward Wylkes,† . . . . Brunte widowe, Thomas Vicars, Roberte Gryffin, Phillipp Rogers, ... Peare widowe . . . . . Younge widowe, and . . . . . Byddle, have every of them severall estats for all the residue of the said terme of lxxxxij. yeares, some of them of and in severall messuages with thappurtenaunces, and others of them of and in severall shopps

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*, A contemparary note says; "Tho. Jakeman in the bill named of Shottery I take is of Bynton, for eyther Jakeman, Kampson, or Cowper, bought the land in Bynton. The land which you entytle Jakeman to have, doth ly in Bynton fields."

† Interlined for *Wasond*, which is erased.

barnes and severall gardens, every of the said severall messuages and parts of the premisses wherein they severally have such estats, beinge of the severall yearely values of three pownds, by the yeare or thereabouts; and by reason of the said severall estats and interests soe respectyvely beinge in the said Lord Carewe, Sir Edward Grevill, Sir Edward Conway,* and in your said oratours, and in the said Mary Combe, William Combe, John Combe, John Lane, Anthonie Nashe, Thomas Barber, Daniell Baker, John Smyth, ffrauncis Smyth, John Nashe, William Burman, Thomas Burman, John Lupton, Thomas Horneby, Thomas Hamond, John ffifield, William Smarte, Thomas Aynge, Thomas Holmes, Edward Ingram, Richard Ingram, Thomas Bucke, Thomas Gryffin, Edward Wylkes, ... Brunte, Thomas Vicars, Roberte Gryffin, Phillipp Rogers, ... ffletcher, ... Peare, ... Younge, and ..... Byddle, every of them, and every of their executours and assignes, ought in all right, equity, reason, and good conscience, for and duringe the severall respectyve contynuances of their severall respectyve interests, estats, and termes in the premisses, and according to the severall values of the said severall premisses soe enjoyed by them, and the rents they doe yearely receyve for the same, to pay unto the executours, administrators, or assignes of the said John Barker, a ratable and proportionable parte and porcion of the same annuell or yearely rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iij.*d.* by and uppon the said assureaunce and conveyance soe as aforesaid by the said John Barker made unto the said Sir John Huband reserved and payable; But soe yt is, yf yt may please your honorable good lordshippe, that the said Lord Carewe, Sir Edward Grevill, Sir Edward Conway, Mary Combe, William Combe, or anye other of the said partyes, at anie tyme synce the said assurances and conveyances soe made and derived from or under the said interest of the said Sir John Huband, for that uppon or by the deeds of their severall under estats or assignements unto them made, they, or those under whom they clayme (excepte the said Mary Combe, Thomas Greene, William Combe, John Combe, and William Shackspeare, whoe only are to pay for tythes of their said severall moytyes before specified v.*li.* and noe more yearely duringe their said respectyve interests), were not directed nor appoynted nor anie covenants by them or anie of them, or anie other under whom they or anie of them doe clayme (excepte touchinge the said severall yearely ffyve pownds soe to be paid for the said moytyes) were made, whereby yt might appeare howe much of the same rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* ought to be paid for every of the said severall premisses (excepte concerning the said moityes) could never yet be drawen to agree howe to paye the residue of the said rente, or be brought to paye anie precise parte or porcion at all towards the same; but divers of them, beinge of great ability, doe divers tymes forbeare and deny to pay anie parte at all towards the same (except the persons before excepted only as touchinge the said severall ffyve pownds for their said severall moytyes), alledging and saieinge,

* *Ann Huband* inserted, but afterwards erased.

Lett them that are affrayd to forfayte or loose their estats looke to yt, and amongst them see the said rente be truely and duelye paid, for they doubte but they shall doe well enough with the executours and assignes of the said Jo. Barker; further excusinge their not paieinge anie rent at all for the residue of the premisses other then the said moytyes, by sayeinge that yf they could find anie thinge in anie of their deeds of assignments or conveyaunces chargeinge them precisely with any part thereof, or in any wise declaringe howe much they are to pay, they would willingly as is fitt pay such rate and porcion as they were soe bownd unto, but because they find noe such matter to charge them (excepte the said parties excepted, which by the deeds of their estats are directed for the said severall moytyes to pay the said severall yearely rents of v.*li.* apeece), therefore they will not pay anie thinge at all towards the said residue of the said rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* untyll by some legall course or proceedinge in some courte of equity yt shalbe declared what part or porcion in reason and equity every severall owner of the said severall premisses owght to pay towards the same, and be judicially ordered thereunto, which lett them that thinke that a good course endevour to bringe to passe, when they shall see good, or words to such lyke effecte; soe as your oratours, their said respectyve estats and interests of and in their said severall premisses aforesaid and the estats of divers of the said partyes, which would gladly pay a reasonable parte towards the said rente, but doe nowe refuse to joine with your said oratours in their then said suite, for feare of some other of the said parties which doe soe refuse to contrybute, doe remayne and stand subject to be forfeyted by the negligence or willfullnes of divers or anie other of the said partyes, which manie tymes will pay nothinge, whereas your oratours Richard Lane and William Shackspeare, and some fewe others of the said parties, are wholly, and against all equity and good conscience, usually dryven to pay the same for preservacion of their estats of and in the parts of the premisses belonginge unto them, and albeyt your said oratours have taken great paynes and travayle in entreatinge and endevoringe to bringe the said parties of their owne accords, and without suite of lawe, to agree every one unto a reasonable contribucion towards the same residue of the same rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* accordinge to the value of suche of the premisses as they enjoy, and onely for their respectyve tymes and termes therein, yet have they refused and denied and styll doe refuse and deny to be perswaded or drawen hereunto, and some of them being encoraged, as yt should seme, by some frendly and kind promise of the said Henry Barker, assignee of the said John Barker, that they should find favour, thoughe their said estats should be all forfeyted, have given yt forth that they should be glade and cared not a whitt yf the estats of some or all the said premisses should be forfeyted, for they should doe well enough with the sayd Henry Barker. In tender consideracion whereof, and for soe much as yt is against all equytye and reason that the estats of some that are willinge to paye a reasonable parte toward the said residue of the said rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* havinge respecte to the smalnes of the values of the things they doe possesse, should depend uppon the carlesnes and frowardnes or other practices of others,

which will not paie a reasonable parte or allie thinge at all toward the same, and for that yt is most agreeable to all reason, equity and good conscience, that every person, his executors and assignes, should be ratably charged with a yearely porcion toward the said residue of the said rente, accordinge to the yearely benefitt he enjoyeth or receaveth, and for that your oratours have noe meanes, by the order or course of common lawes of this realme, to enforce or compell anie of the said partyes to yeald anie certayne contrybucion towards the same, and soe are and styll shalbee remediles therein, unles they may be in that behalf relieved by your Lordshipps gracious clemency and relyef to others in such lyke cases extended; May yt therefore please your good lordshippe, the premisses considered, and yt beinge also considered that very manie poore peoples estats are subjecte to be overthrown by breach of the condicion aforesaid, and thereby doe depend uppon the negligences, wills, or practices of others,* and shall contynue in doubte to be turned out of doores, with their wives and familes, thorough the practice or wilfullnes of such others, to write your honorable lettres unto the said Lord Carewe, thereby requiringe him to appeare in the highe Courte of Chancery to answere to the premisses, and to graunte unto the said oratours his Majesties most gracious writts of subpena to be directed unto the said Sir Edward Grevill, Sir Edward Conway, and other the said parties before named, and to the said Henry Barker, whoe claymeth under the right and tytle of the said John Barker, and usually receyveth the said rente in his owne name, and usually maketh acquittances upon the receipt thereof, and under his owne hand and in his owne name, as in his owne right, and usually maketh acquittances of divers parts thereof, thereby commandinge them and every of them at a certayne day, and under a certayne payne therein to be lymitted, to be and personally appeare before your good lordshippe in his highnes most honorable Court of Chancery, fully, perfectly, and directly to awnswere to all and every the premisses, and to sett forth the severall yearely values of the severall premisses soe by them enjoyed, and to shewe good cause whie a comission should not be awarded forth of the said most honorable courte for the examininge of witnesses to the severall values aforesaid, and for the assessinge, taxinge, and ratinge thereof, that thereuppon yt may appeare howe much everye of the said parties, and their executors, administrators, and assignes, for and duringe their said severall respectyve estats and interests, ought in reason proporcionably to pay for the same towards the said residue of the said yearely rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* that the same may be ordered and established by decree of your most honorable good Lordshippe accordyngly, and the said Henry Barker to awnswere to the premisses, and to sett forth what estate or interest he claymeth in the said rente of xxvij.*li.* xiij.*s.* iiij.*d.* and also to shewe good cause whie he should not be ordered, to accept the rents ratably to be assessed as aforesaid, and to enter onely into the tenement

* "Men obstinate and of froward and evill disposicion" inserted, and afterwards erased.

and estate onely of such persons which shall refuse or neglect to pay suche parte of the said rente, as by your most honorable order there shalbe sett downe and rated uppon them severally to paye, and further to stand to and abide such further and other order and direccions touchinge the premisses as to your good Lordshipp shall seeme to stand with right equity and good conscience. And your Lordshipps said oratours shall dayly pray unto thalmightie for your Lordshipps health with dayly encrease in all honour and happines.

Endorsed, *Lane, Greene, et Shakspeare com.*

W. Combe et al. respond.

The same year witnesseth the destruction of the Globe Theatre by fire,* but it is not known whether Shakespeare was still a proprietor in that establishment. If this circumstance did not affect his pecuniary affairs, it is most likely that many of his manuscripts were then lost, and perhaps may have thus prevented the first collected edition of his works being as complete as could have been desired. The fire of London, and several fires at Stratford, may also afterwards have destroyed some of the poet's writings and copies of his plays;† yet it is extremely difficult to account for their total disappearance, and I cannot help thinking that letters of Shakespeare must still be preserved in some obscure recesses. Not a scrap of any of his plays in his own handwriting is known to be preserved, but a contemporary manuscript of one was recently found in the archives

* "No longer since then yesterday, while Bourbege his companie were acting at the Globe the play of Hen. 8, and there shooting of certayne chambers in way of triumph, the fire catch'd and fastened upon the thatch of the house, and there burned so furiously, as it consumed the whole house, and all in lesse then two houres, the people having enough to doe to save themselves."—*Letter from Thomas Lorkin, dated "Lond. this last of June,* 1613," *MS. Harl.* 7002.

† According to Roberts (An Answer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakespear, 1729, p. 46), two large chests full of Shakespeare's loose papers and manuscripts were destroyed in the great fire at Warwick. They were, he says, "in the hands of an ignorant baker of Warwick, who married one of the descendants from Shakespear," and adds, that they "were carelesly scatter'd and thrown about as garret lumber and litter, to the particular knowledge of the late Sir William Bishop, till they were all consum'd in the general fire and destruction of that town."

of Sir Edward Dering, a discovery which gives earnest of others of a similar kind.*

In the year 1614 Shakespeare was occupied on business relating to certain proposed enclosures in the common lands near Stratford, which were vehemently, and in the end successfully, opposed by the corporation. The following are memoranda in which the claims of the owners of the property are set forth, the land here mentioned as Shakespeare's being part of that which he had purchased of William and John Combe in 1602:

5 Septembris, 1614.

Auncient ffreeholders in the ffields of Old Stratford and Welcombe.

Mr. Shakspeare 4 yard land, noe common nor grownd beyond Gospell-bush, nor grownd in Sandfield, nor none in Slow-hill-field beyond Bishopton, nor none in the enclosures beyond Bishopton.

Thomas Parker in right of his wief half a yard land, noe land in Sandfield; qu. if Gospell-bush and Slow-hill-field; but hath common over all the fields.

Mr. Lane in Perrye's occupacion half a yard land: hath some land beyond Gospell-bush, and hey in Welcombe-meadow.

Sir ffrauncys Smyth 19 or 20 ridges in the ffields, wherof 6 in Watt-ffurlong neer Welcombe-medow, noe common, j. sleshing upon Johnsons gate, 5 at the upper end of the Dingles, and 5 sleching upon Mr. Nashe's inclosures.

Mace 21 or 22 lands or therabouts, most of them lying in Sandfield, wherof 4 shetting upon the 4 elms into Bruncle way.

And 5 leys in the Hame.

Arthur Cawdrey half a yard lande.

Mr. Wright, vicar of Bishopton, 4 leys in the Hame.

The lease of the tithes which Shakespeare purchased in 1605 would also have been affected in value had the projected enclosures been carried into effect. This was probably the chief reason that caused the poet to exert himself so

* Sir Edward Dering's MS. was published by me in 1845, for the Shakespeare Society. The only other early MS. of his plays known to exist is a copy of the Merry Wives of Windsor, written during the Commonwealth, and containing many curious variations from all the printed editions. This latter MS. is in my own possession.

energetically on the subject, and with a careful regard to his interests, the following agreement appears to have been executed in anticipation of the enclosure being made:

Coppy of the articles with Mr. Shakspeare.

Vicesimo octavo die Octobris, anno Domini 1614. Articles of agreement indented [and] made betwene William Shackespeare of Stretford in the County of Warwick gent. on the one partye, and William Replingham of Great Harborow in the Countie of Warwick gent. on the other partie, the daye and yeare abovesaid.

Item, the said William Replingham for him, his heires, executors, and assignes, doth covenaunte and agree to and with the said William Shackespeare, his heires and assignes, That he the said William Replingham, his heires or assignes, shall, uppon reasonable request, satisfie content and make recompence unto him the said William Shackespeare or his assignes, for all such losse, detriment, and hinderance as he the said William Shackespeare, his heires and assignes, and one Thomas Greene gent. shall or maye be thought in the viewe and judgement of foure indifferent persons, to be indifferentlie elected by the said William and William, and their heires, and in default of the said William Replingham, by the said William Shackespeare or his heires onely, to survey and judge the same to sustayne or incurre for or in respecte of the increasinge of the yearlie value of the tythes they the said William Shackespeare and Thomas doe joyntlie or severallie hold and enjoy in the said fields or anie of them, by reason of anie inclosure or decaye of tyllage there ment and intended by the said William Replingham, and that the said William Replingham and his heires shall procure such sufficient securitie unto the said William Shackespeare and his heires for the performance of theis covenaunts, as shal bee devised by learned counsell; In witnes whereof the parties abovsaid to theis presents interchaungeablie their hands and seales have put, the daye and year first above wrytten.

Sealed and delivered in the presence of us,

Tho. Lucas.
Jo. Rogers.
Anthonie Nasshe.
Mich. Olney.

A calamitous fire had happened at Stratford in the previous summer, and the corporation alleged the distress of the poorer classes on that account as a reason their sufferings should not be increased by the enclosure. They sent their clerk, Thomas Greene, to London on this business, and, in

some memoranda by him on a folio sheet in the possession of Mr. Wheler, he thus notices a conversation he had with Shakespeare on the subject.

1614. Jovis, 17 No. My cosen Shakspear comyng yesterdy to town, I went to see him how he did. He told me that they assured him they ment to inclose no further than to Gospell Bush, and so upp straight (leavyng out part of the dyngles to the ffield) to the gate in Clopton hedg, and take in Salisburyes peece; and that they mean in Aprill to survey the land, and then to gyve satisfaccion, and not before; and he and Mr. Hall say they think ther will be nothyng done at all.

Greene returned to Stratford about a fortnight after this date, and, continuing his notes, he informs us that letters were sent by the corporation to Shakespeare and to Mainwaring, a person in the household of Lord Ellesmere. The letter addressed to Mainwaring is still in existence, detailing the inconveniences the projected enclosures would occasion; but that to Shakespeare is unfortunately lost. A petition on the subject was presented to the Privy Council, and in 1618 an order was made, not only forbidding the enclosure, but peremptorily commanding that some steps which Combe actually seems to have commenced in it should be at once retraced. The other memorandum of Greene's is as follows:

23 Dec. A hall. Lettres wrytten, one to Mr. Manyring, another to Mr. Shakspear, with almost all the company's hands to eyther. I also wrytte myself to my cosen Shakspear the coppyes of all our acts, and then also a not of the inconvenyences wold happen by the inclosure.

The relationship between Greene and Shakespeare has not been correctly ascertained, but the former may have been a son of Thomas Green alias Shakspere, who was buried at Stratford on March 6th, 1589-90. Green was not an unusual name in the neighbourhood, but it appears from the register of Aston Cantlow that a family of the

name resided at Wilmecote, where Shakespeare's parents had landed interests. The following entry occurs in the early register of burials for that village: 1587-8. The iij.th day of Januàry was bureyd Robertus Grene de Wylmecto. Perhaps a more careful search might discover the period and the circumstances under which the two families became connected with each other.

The Stratford records contain no further notice of Shakespeare before his death in 1616, but the following entry, which occurs in the Chamberlains' accounts for 1614, appears to show that the religious devotion which characterised his descendants had already exhibited itself,—

Item, for on quart of sack and on quart of clarrett winne, geven to a preacher at the Newe Place - - - - - - - xx.*d.*

and the notice is of more importance than might be at first supposed, for it seems to give a decided negative to the incredible assertion of Davies (p. 123), that Shakespeare died a papist. The poet may possibly have become piously inclined in his latter days, but I think most direct testimony is against such an opinion, and the epitaph on his daughter seems to imply the contrary,—

Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,
Wise to salvation was good Mistriss Hall.
Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this
Wholy of Him with whom she's now in blisse.

Most biographers have represented Shakespeare as an epitaph writer during his retirement at Stratford, not merely of jocular epigrams like that on Combe, but of compositions of a more serious description. I shall give these with their authorities, merely observing that to attribute them to his pen implies a deterioration of power for which no one has assigned a sufficient reason. In Dugdale's collection of monumental inscriptions for the county of Salop, taken in

1663 (a MS. in the Herald's College), is given the inscription upon a tomb in Tonge church to the memory of Sir Thomas Stanley, who died in 1576, upon the east and west ends of which respectively are the following verses, written, according to Dugdale, "by William Shakespeare, the late famous tragedian."

Aske who lyes here, but do not weepe,
He is not dead, he doth but sleepe.
This stony register is for his bones,
His fame is more perpetuall than these stones,
And his own goodness, wth himself being gone,
Shall live when earthly monument is none.

Not monumentall stone preserves our fame,
Nor skye-aspiring piramids our name;
The memory of him for whom this stands
Shall outlive marble and defacers' hands:
When all to time's consumption shall be given,
Stanley, for whom this stands, shall stand in heaven!

Another epitaph, of far less merit, on Elias James, who was perhaps one of a family of that name who resided at Stratford, has been assigned to Shakespeare on the authority of an early manuscript in Rawlinson's collection in the Bodleian Library:

An Epitaph.

When God was pleas'd, the world unwilling yet,
Elias James to Nature payd his debt,
And here reposeth: as he liv'd he dyde,
The saying in him strongly verefide,—
Such life, such death: then, the known truth to tell,
He liv'd a godly life, and dyde as well.

Wm. Shakspeare.

In the accounts of Lord Harrington, Treasurer of the Chamber to James I. for 1613, the titles of several plays of Shakespeare occur as having been presented before Prince Charles, the Lady Elizabeth, and the Prince Palatine Elector, the two latter having left England in the April of that year.

Many other dramas were also played in the presence of the illustrious foreigners, but the following entry is the only one in which any of Shakespeare's are mentioned. The original MS. of these accounts is preserved in the Bodleian Library, in Rawlinson's collection, A. 239:*

Paid to John Heminges uppon the councells warr^t, dated at Whitehall, xx^o. die Maii 1613, for presentinge before the Princes Hignes, the La. Elizabeth, and the Prince Pallatyne Elector, fowerteene severall playes, viz. one playe called Filaster, one other call'd the Knott of Fooles, one other Much Adoe abowte Nothinge, the Mayeds Tragedie, the Merye Dyvell of Edmonton, the Tempest, a Kinge and no Kinge, the Twins Tragedie, the Winters' Tale, Sr. John Falstafe, the Moore of Venice, the Nobleman, Cæsars Tragedye, and one other called Love lyes a Bleedinge, all wch playes weare played w^thin the tyme of this accompte, viz. p^d. the some of iiij.(xx).xiij.*li.* vj*s.* viij.*d.*

The latter part of Shakespeare's life, according to Rowe, "was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends;" and the same writer adds, that he "is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford." The last notice of Shakespeare in London is dated in November 1614, and no account of his engagements in the following year has yet been discovered. On February 10th, 1616, his daughter Judith was married to Thomas Queeny, whose father in 1598 had applied to Shakespeare for a loan of £30 (p. 178). Their son, Shakespeare Quiny, baptized in the following November, was probably named after the deceased poet; and there can be no doubt, from the notice in Shakespeare's will, that the nuptials were celebrated with his sanction. It has been supposed that the will had special reference to this marriage, having been originally dated "vicesimo quinto die *Januarii*, anno regni domini nostri

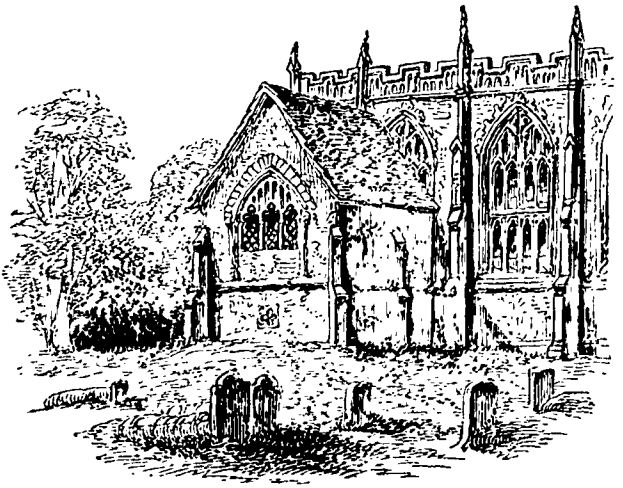
* Copies of the entries in this MS. relating to plays were published by Mr. Cunningham in the Shakespeare Society's Papers, ii. 123, from an interleaved copy of Langbaine. The original MS. supplies a few immaterial corrections. It has been referred to by Malone.

Jacobi nunc regis Angliæ &c. decimo quarto," but the 25th of January in the fourteenth year of James fell in 1617, so that we may perhaps conclude this was only a clerical error. The poet is there described as in perfect health and memory; yet in a few short weeks he was no more. Shakespeare died at New Place on April 23d, 1616, and was buried in the chancel of Stratford church two days afterwards.

Edward Allen, the celebrated actor, and Shakespeare's contemporary, made a large fortune by his professional labours, and took the surest method of succeeding in a praiseworthy desire to hand down his name and industry to future generations, by a noble foundation not affected by the vicissitudes which attend the continuance of property in the hands of descendants. The name of Shakespeare is bequeathed by his works in perpetuity to all posterity, and it needs no artificial support such as this; but it is undeniable that, unconscious of his future eminence, our great dramatist was actuated by a similar anxiety, and that his continued increase of property in the neighbourhood of his early home had constant reference to the establishment of a family which should for ages inherit the fruits of his exertions.* The limitations of our law of entail occasioned the poet's wishes to be defeated within a very short period after his decease; and, although no lineal descendants from him remain, there is too much reason to fear the representatives of Shakespeare on his sister's side are not in a position we can contemplate with satisfaction. The will is the last document written in the lifetime of the poet that can be produced. It is preserved in the Prerogative Office, London, and has been printed several times, but most accurately by

* Shakespear, whom you and ev'ry playhouse bill
Style the divine, the matchless, what you will,
For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,
And grew immortal in his own despight.—*Pope*, ed. 1770, ii. 264.

Mr. Collier, who has considered it necessary to follow the original in its numerous capital letters and want of punctuation.* There are several interlineations in the document, which are here indicated by italics as more convenient than foot-notes. It is guarded with unusual care, and the public are not permitted to collate copies with the original; so that a great deal of what has been said about the difficulty of editing it really arises from want of opportunity, not from the MS. itself, which is written with sufficient clearness.



Exterior of the Charnel-house, Stratford.

* In MS. Lansd. 721 is contained a copy of the probate of Shakespeare's will, communicated from Stratford in 1747 by the vicar to Mr. West. It is accompanied with the following curious observations:

"I have been extremely concern'd I shou'd disappoint you in your expectation of seeing Shakespear's will. As soon as you left me, I made a diligent search, and at length had the luck to meet with it, and hope for the time to come I shall have more prudence than to promise what I cannot readily perform: I have now transcribed it a second time, which transcript, as some small attonement, I humbly beg your acceptance of. I am pretty certain the thing itself will not come up to the idea you may have entertain'd of it, as it bears the name of Shakespear's will: The legacies and bequests therein are undoubtedly as he intended; but the manner of introducing them appears to me so dull and irregular, so absolutely void of the least particle of that spirit which animated our great poet, that it must lessen his character as a writer, to imagine the least sentence of it his production. The only satisfaction I receive in reading it, is to know who were his relations, and what he left them, which may perhaps just make you also amends for the trouble of perusing it."

Vicesimo quinto die *Martii*,* anno regni domini nostri Jacobi, nunc regis† Angliæ &c. decimo quarto, et Scotiæ xlix°. annoque Domini 1616.

T. Wmi. Shackspeare.

In the name of God, amen! I William Shackspeare, of Stratford upon Avon in the countie of Warr. gent. in perfect health and memorie, God be praysed, doe make and ordayne this my last will and testament in manner and forme followeing, that ys to saye, ffirst, I comend my soule into the handes of God my Creator, hoping and assuredlie beleeving, through thonelie merites of Jesus Christe my Saviour, to be made partaker of lyfe everlastinge, and my bodye to the earth whereof yt ys‡ made. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my daughter§ Judyth one hundred and fyftie poundes of lawfull English money, to be paied unto her in manner and forme followeing, that ys to saye, one hundred pounds *in discharge of her marriage porcion* within one yeare after my deceas, with consideracion after the rate of twoe shillinges in the pound for soe long tyme as the same shalbe unpaied unto her after my deceas, and the fyftie poundes residewe thereof upon her surrendring *of* or gyving of such sufficient securitie as the overseers of this my will shall like of to surrender or graunte all her estate and right that shall discend or come unto her after my deceas, or *that shee* nowe hath, of in or to one copiehold tenemente with thappurtenaunces lyeing and being in Stratford upon Avon aforesaied in the saied countie of Warr. being parcell or holden of the mannour of Rowington, unto my daughter Susanna Hall and her heires for ever. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my saied daughter Judith one hundred and fyftie poundes more, if shee or anie issue of her bodie be lyvinge att thend of three yeares next ensueing the daie of the date of this my will, during which tyme my executours are to paie her consideracion from my deceas according to the rate aforesaid; and if she dye within the saied tearme without issue of her bodye, then my will ys, and I doe gyve and bequeath one hundred poundes thereof to my neece Elizabeth Hall, and the fiftie poundes to be sett fourth by my executours during the lief of my sister Johane Harte, and the use and proffitt thereof cominge shalbe payed to my saied sister Jone, and after her deceas the saied l.li shall remaine amongst the children of my saied sister equallie to be devided amongst them; but if my saied daughter Judith be lyving att thend of the saied three yeares, or anie yssue of her bodye, then my will ys and‖ soe I devise and bequeath the saied hundred and fyftie poundes to be sett out *by my executours and overseers* for the best benefitt of her and her issue, and *the stock* not *to be* paied unto her soe long as

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* Originally written *Januarii*.

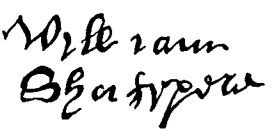
† Mr. Collier incorrectly reads *rex*, the original being R. contracted.

‡ *Was* in the copy of the probate in MS. Lansd. 721.

§ Originally *sonne and daughter*, but afterwards altered.

‖ Mr. Hunter asserts that the will has never been sufficiently well edited, saying, as an example, that the word *and* in this place is not to be found there; but, in fact, the usual contracted form of the conjunction is evidently seen in the original. Compare similar passages in Combe's will.

she shalbe marryed and covert baron;* but my will ys that she shall have the consideracion yearelie paied unto her during her lief, and, after her deceas, the saied stock and consideracion to bee paied to her children, if she have anie, and if not, to her executours or assignes, she lyving the saied terme after my deceas, Provided that if such husbond, as she shall att thend of the saied three yeares be marryed unto, or att anie† [tyme] after, doe sufficientlie assure unto her and thissue of her bodie landes awnswereable to the porcion by this my will gyven unto her, and to be adjudged soe by my executours and overseers, then my will ys that the saied cl.li shalbe paied to such husbond as shall make such assurance to his owne use. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto my saied sister Jone xx.li and all my wearing apparrell,‡ to be paied and delivered within one yeare after my deceas; and I doe will and devise unto her *the house* with thappurtenaunces in Stratford, wherein she dwelleth, for her naturall lief, under the yearlie rent of xij.d Item, I gyve and bequeath unto her three



sonnes, William Harte, [Thomas§] Hart, and Michaell Harte, fyve poundes a peece, to be paied within one yeare after my deceas.‖ Item, I gyve and bequeath unto *the saied Elizabeth Hall*¶ all my plate, *except my brod silver and gilt bole*, that I now have att the date of this my will. Item, I gyve and bequeath unto the poore of Stratford aforesaied tenn poundes; to Mr. Thomas Combe my sword; to Thomas Russell esquier fyve poundes, and to Frauncis Collins of the borough of Warr. in the countie of Warr. gentleman thirteene poundes, sixe shillinges, and eight pence, to be paied within one yeare after my

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* After *baron* was originally written "by my executours and overseers," but the sentence is cancelled. In the copy of the will in the registry the word *under* was inserted before *covert*, but it was afterwards erased.

† Mr. Collier incorrectly reads *attaine*.

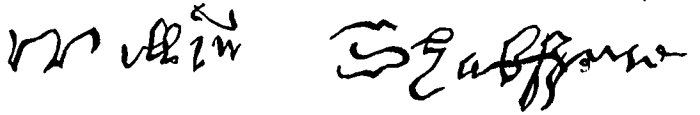
‡ "Part of these premises which belonged to Shakspeare are still occupied by a descendant of Joan Harte, sister to our poet, who pursues the humble occupation of a butcher. His father, Thomas Harte, died about a year ago at the age of sixty-seven. He informed me that, when a boy, he well remembered having, with other boys, dressed themselves as Scaramouches (such was his phrase) in the wearing apparel of our Shakspeare."—*Ireland's Picturesque Views on the Warwickshire Avon*, 1795, p. 189.

§ This Christian name is omitted in the original will, but appears in the copy of the probate in MS. Lansd. 721.

‖ Here is inserted the following passage, but cancelled; "to be sett out for her within one yeare after my deceas by my executours, with thadvise and direccions of my overseers, for her best profitt, untill her mariage, and then the same with the increase thereof to be paied unto her." Mr. Collier says the last word *her* was not erased, but on comparing the original, I find it clearly crossed through.

¶ The sentence in italics was originally *her*.

deceas. Item, I gyve and bequeath to *Hamlett Sadler** xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$ to buy him a ringe; *to William Raynoldes gent.* xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$ *to buy him a ringe;* to my godson William Walker xx.$^{s.}$ in gold; to Anthonye Nashe gent. xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.$^{d.}$, and to Mr. John Nashe xxvj.$^{s.}$ viij.*d.*;† *and to my fellowes John Hemynges, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell,* xxvj.*s.* viij.*d. a peece to buy them ringes.* Item, I gyve, will, bequeath and devise, unto my daughter Susanna Hall, *for better enabling of her to performe this my will, and towardes the performans thereof,* all that capitall messuage or tenemente, with thappurtenaunces, *in Stratford aforesaid,* called the New Place, wherein I nowe dwell, and two messuages or tenementes, with thappurtenaunces, scituat lyeing and being in Henley streete within the borough of Stratford aforesaid; and all my barnes, stables, orchardes, gardens, landes, tenementes and hereditamentes whatsoever, scituat lyeing and being, or to be had, receyved, perceyved, or taken, within the townes, hamletes, villages, fieldes and groundes of Stratford upon Avon, Oldstratford, Bushopton, and Welcombe, or in anie of them in the said countie of Warr. And alsoe all that messuage or tenemente with thappurtenaunces wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, scituat lyeng and being in the Blackfriers in London nere the Wardrobe; and all other my landes, tenementes, and hereditamentes whatsoever, To have and to hold all and singuler the saied premisses with theire appurtenaunces unto the saied Susanna Hall for and during the terme of her naturall lief, and after her deceas, to the first sonne of her bodie lawfullie yssueing, and to the heires males of the bodie of the saied first sonne lawfullie yssueinge, and for defalt of such issue, to the second sonne of her bodie lawfullie issueinge, and to the heires males of the bodie of the saied second sonne lawfullie yssueinge, and for defalt of such heires, to the third sonne of the bodie of the saied Susanna lawfullie yssueing, and of the heires males of the bodie of the saied third sonne lawfullie yssueing, and for defalt of such issue, the same soe to be and remaine to the ffourth,‡ ffyfth, sixte, and seaventh sonnes of her bodie lawfullie issueing one after another, and to the heires males of the



bodies of the saied fourth, fifth, sixte and seaventh sonnes lawfullie yssueing, in such manner as yt ys before lymitted to be and remaine to the first, second and third sonns of her bodie, and to theire heires males, and for defalt of such issue, the saied premisses to be and remaine to my sayed neece Hall, and the heires males of her bodie lawfullie yssueing, and for defalt of such issue, to my daughter Judith, and the heires males of her bodie lawfullie issueinge, and for defalt of

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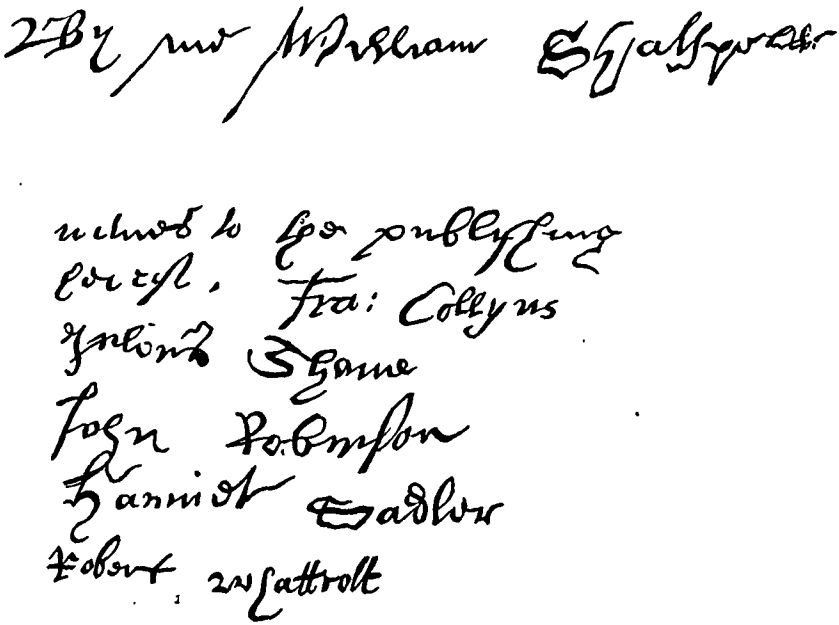
* Originally *Mr. Richard Tyler thelder.*

† *In gold* was originally inserted here, and the word viij.*d.* is interlined.

‡ Originally, *ffourth sonne.*

such issue, to the right heires of me the saied William Shackspeare for ever. *Item, I gyve unto my wief my second best bed with the furniture.* Item, I gyve and bequeath to my saied daughter Judith my broad silver gilt bole. All the rest of my goodes, chattel, leases, plate, jewels, and household stuffe whatsoever, after my dettes and legasies paied, and my funerall expences discharged, I give, devise, and bequeath to my sonne in lawe, John Hall gent., and my daughter Susanna, his wief, whom I ordaine and make executours of this my last will and testament. And I doe intreat and appoint *the saied* Thomas Russell esquier and Frauncis Collins gent. to be overseers hereof, and doe revoke all former wills, and publishe this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my *hand** the daie and yeare first abovewritten.



Probatum coram magistro Willielmo Byrde, legum doctore comiss. &c. xxij.do die mensis Junii, anno Domini 1616, juramento Johannis Hall, unius executorum, &c. cui de bene &c. jurat. reservat. potestate &c. Susannæ Hall alteri executorum &c. cum venerit &c. petitur. (Inv. ex.)

A great deal of discussion has been occasioned by the indistinctness of the three signatures of Shakespeare attached to this will, some contending it is *Shakspere* in

* *Seale* was originally written.

all the instances, others that the letter *a* appears in the second syllable in the last. I fear the question will ever be doubtful; for if we read *Shakspere*, a redundancy appears for which it is difficult to account, the final stroke belonging to an *e*, certainly not to a mere flourish; and it would be scarcely prudent to express a decided opinion on the matter, the signatures being apparently traced by a tremulous hand, and very badly executed. The first autograph has been much damaged since it was traced by Steevens in 1776, and the fac-simile here given has been completed by the copy published by him in 1778. When Steevens made his tracing he was accompanied by Malone, and the latter thus mentions their visit to the Prerogative Office, in a MS. in the Bodleian Library,—"On the 24th of September, 1776, I went with my friend, Mr. Steevens, to the Prerogative Office in Doctors Commons to see Shakspeare's original will, in order to get a fac-simile of the handwriting. The will is written in the clerical hand of that age on three small (?) sheets, fastned at top like a lawyer's brief. Shakspeare's name is signed at the bottom of the first and second sheet, and his final signature, 'by me William Shakspeare,' is in the middle of the third sheet. The name, however, at the bottom of the first sheet, is not in the usual place, but in the margin at the left hand, and is so different from the others, that we doubted whether it was his handwriting. He appears to have been very ill and weak when he signed his will, for the hand is very irregular and tremulous. I suspect he signed his name at the end of the will first, and so went backwards, which will account for that in the first page being worse written than the rest, the hand growing gradually weaker." The three large sheets of paper on which the will is written are joined together in the middle of the top margins, which are covered with a narrow slip of parchment; but, although protected

with the greatest care, if it be left in its present state, I fear nothing can prevent the gradual decay of this precious relic, which has even materially suffered since Steevens made tracings from it seventy years ago. The office in which it is kept is properly guarded by the strictest regulations, for manuscripts required for legal purposes demand a verification seldom necessary in literary inquiries; and it seems these rules forbid the separation of the sheets of the will, which, singly, could be safely preserved between plates of glass, and so daily examined without the slightest injury. At present the folding and unfolding requisite on every inspection of the document imperceptibly tend to the deterioration of the fragile substance on which it is written, and I sincerely hope the consent of the registrars will at length be given to the adoption of a course which shall permanently save this interesting record of the last wishes of the great poet, the most important memorial of him that has descended to our days.

The three signatures of Shakespeare attached to his will, and that appended to the indenture preserved in the library of the Corporation of London, are the only autographs of the poet of unquestionable authority that are now known to exist.* Most careful fac-similes of all of these, from the accurate pencil of Mr. Fairholt, are given in the preceding pages, and the reader will thus be enabled to judge of the manner in which the dramatist signed his name. It is unnecessary to say that many alleged autographs of Shakespeare have been exhibited; but forgeries of them are so numerous, and the continuity of design, which a fabricator could not produce in a long document, is so easy to obtain in a mere signature, that the only safe course is to adopt none as genuine on internal evidence. A signature in a

* The mortgage deed of the property in the Blackfriars exhibits another, but it has been unfortunately lost or mislaid.

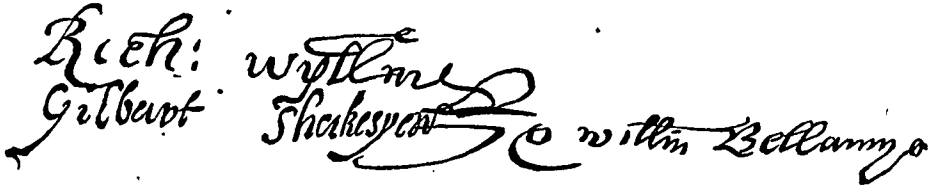
copy of Florio's translation of Montaigne, 1609,* is open to this objection. The verbal evidence as to its existence only extends as far back as 1780, after the publication of Steevens's fac-simile of the last autograph in the will, of which it may be a copy with intentional variations. Even supposing we can find the same formed capitals elsewhere, and a contraction precisely similar to the very unusual one over the letter *m*, no evidence on such a subject which does not commence much earlier than 1780 can safely be relied upon. It is unnecessary to allude to the claims which have been produced in favour of other supposititious signatures of the poet, for none of them will bear investigation.

It will be observed that it is therefore a matter of great uncertainty whether Shakespeare was one of the few persons of the time who adopted an uniform orthography in his signature; but, on the supposition that he always wrote his name *Shakspere*, it was contended as early as 1784† that it should be printed in this curtailed form. The question is one of very small importance, and the only circumstance worth consideration in the matter is the tendency of this innovation to introduce the pronunciation of *Shaxpere*, a piece of affectation so far dangerous, inasmuch as it harmonizes not with the beautiful lines that have been consecrated to his memory by Ben Jonson and other eminent poets; and those who have adopted it seem to have overlooked the fact, that in the orthography of proper names the printed literature of the day is the only safe criterion. In the case of Shakespeare, there are the poems of Lucrece, and Venus and

* The well-known coincidence of a passage in this work with one in the Tempest, so far from being a testimony in favour of the autograph, is the reverse; for the similarity was pointed out long before 1780, and nothing is more likely than that a forger should select a book known to have been read by Shakespeare for the object on which to exercise his skill.

† In some papers in the Gentleman's Magazine.

Adonis, published under his own superintendence, in which the name occurs *Shake-speare*, and so it is found in almost every work printed in the lifetime of the poet. Shakespeare's son-in-law, in the earlier part of his life, signed his name *Hawle*, and afterwards *Hall*. In 1581 Sir Walter Raleigh signed his name *Rauley;* five years afterwards we find it *Ralegh*. Henslowe sometimes wrote *Heglowe;* and so in innumerable instances. There were doubtlessly exceptions, as the case of Lord Burghley and a few others, but there is no sufficient evidence to show that Shakespeare adhered to any uniform rule. Shakespeare's brother spelt his name *Shakespere*, so that if we adopted the system of guiding our orthography by autographs, we should, when speaking of the poet, write *Shakspere* or *Shakspeare;* but when we have occasion to mention his relative, it must be *Shakespere*.



The only method of reconciling these inconsistencies is to adopt the name as it is bequeathed to us by his contemporaries, and there is a great additional reason for doing so when we reflect on the certainty that the poet was called Shake-speare* by his literary friends. I may add further

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* 118. *To Shakespeare.*

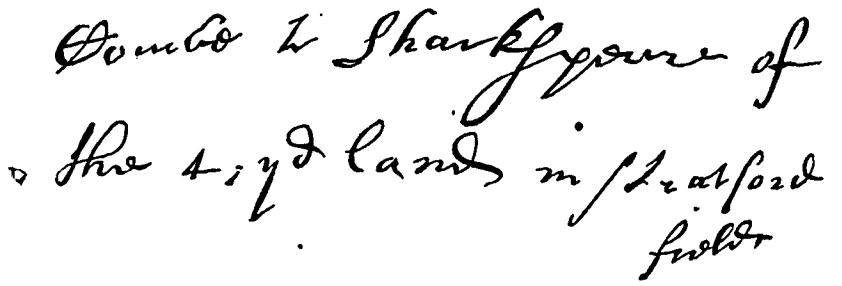
Thy muses sugred daintics seeme to us
Like the fam'd apples of old Tantalus,
For we (admiring) see and heare thy straines,
But none I see or heare those sweets attaines.

119. *To the same.*

Thou hast so us'd thy pen or *shooke thy speare*,
That poets startle, nor thy wit come neare.

Bancroft's Two-Bookes of Epigrammes, 1639.

that Mr. Wheler of Stratford possesses what may be fairly considered as the only sentence known to exist, which can be supposed with any probability to be in the poet's handwriting. It is an endorsement on the indenture between Shakespeare and the Combes in 1602,* a document we know did belong to the dramatist; and Mr. Wheler is of opinion that no scrivener or clerk would have described a deed in such a manner. I certainly agree with him in considering it to be in the autograph of Shakespeare, or of one of the family; and there are similarities to be traced between this and some of the poet's acknowledged signa-



tures. Here we have another orthography *Shackspeare*, and the latter part *eare*, the *a* appearing like *u*, is so similar to that portion of the name in the two last signatures in the will, that it is at once an argument in favour of the appropriation of the above to Shakespeare, and of the correctness of reading *Shakspeare* in those two autographs.

The exact nature of the malady which deprived the world of Shakespeare has not been correctly ascertained. The only direct evidence on the subject is contained in a MS. miscellany by John Ward, vicar of Stratford, preserved in the library of the Medical Society of London; but it was not penned till forty years after the death of Shakespeare.

* In the original this endorsement is in one line, with the exception of the word *field*, which is in the position here indicated.

According to a note at the end of the volume, "this booke was begunne ffeb. 14, 1661, and finished April the 25, 1663, att Mr. Brooks his house in Stratford uppon Avon in Warwickeshire." Several manuscripts by Ward are in the same collection, but this is the only one which contains any notice of Shakespeare of much worth.

Shakspear had but 2 daughters, one whereof Mr. Hall, the physitian, married, and by her had one daughter, to wit, the Lady Bernard of Abbingdon.

I have heard that Mr. Shakespeare was a natural wit, without any art at all;* hee frequented the plays all his younger time, but in his elder days livd at Stratford, and supplied the stage with 2 plays every year, and for that had an allowance so large that hee spent att the rate of 1000*d.* a yeer, as I have heard.

Shakespear, Drayton, and Ben Jhonson, had a merry meeting, and itt seems drank too hard, for Shakespear died of a feavour there contracted.

Remember to peruse Shakespears plays, and bee versed in them, that I may not bee ignorant in that matter.

It may be said in favour of this traditionary account of the poet's last illness, that it is perfectly reasonable and in-

* No notion about Shakespeare was so general as this, and taken in a proper sense, none more correct. It of course implies his disregard of the classical models, and the absence of all pedantic display of learning, considered so essential by most of his contemporaries. Ben Jonson meant no more than this when he remarked to Drummond "that Shakspeer wanted arte," for in his lines in the first folio he expressly commends the art with which Shakespeare has contrived his natural "matter." Shakespeare's far-seeing judgment excluded the barriers that in an after age were found to be blemishes instead of beauties, and it is chiefly on this account that his want of learning was so much insisted upon by the writers of the seventeenth century. According to Fuller, "his learning was very little, so that, as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed and smoothed even, as they are taken out of the earth, so Nature itself was all the art that was used upon him." Honest John Taylor, the water-poet, was of a different opinion, "Spencer and Shakespeare did in art excell," Workes, 1630, iii. 72. Cartwright thus alludes to Shakespeare in some lines on Fletcher, Poems, 1651, p. 273,—

> —— we did sit
> Sometimes five acts out in pure spightfull wit,
> Which flow'd in such true salt, that we did doubt
> In which scene we laught most two shillings out.
> Shakespeare to thee was dull, whose best jest lies
> I' th' ladies questions, and the fools replics,
> Old fashion'd wit, which walk'd from town to town
> In turn'd hose, which our fathers call'd the clown;
> Whose wit our nice times would obsceaness call,
> And which made bawdry pass for comicall.
> Nature was all his art; thy vein was free
> As his, but without his scurility.

telligible, and comes to us on very fair authority. A festive meeting might have accelerated fever, and the bad drainage of Stratford fostered epidemics. The good people of that town were not very careful in such matters;* and the removement of filth without injury to health was not understood in those days. Even in Garrick's time Stratford is mentioned by that great actor as "the most dirty, unseemly, ill pav'd, wretched looking town in all Britain."† We may be quite sure the streets, however classic now as the paths of Shakespeare, were in the days of the poet equally amenable to a similar criticism. Whatever degree of credit, then, we may be disposed to give to the account of the "merry meeting," the probabilities are greatly in favour of the other part of Ward's history being correct.‡ Shakespeare was probably attended in his last illness by his son-in-law, Dr. John Hall. Malone, in a letter dated May 1st, 1790, says, "I find, from Dr. Hall's pocket-book, which was once in my possession, that a Mr. Nason was Shakspeare's apothe-

* *Presenmenttes made this 8th of Januarie*, 1605, *by the juriers holdenn by Mr. William Wyeatte Bailieffe within the burroughe of Stratford att the Quartter Sessions.*

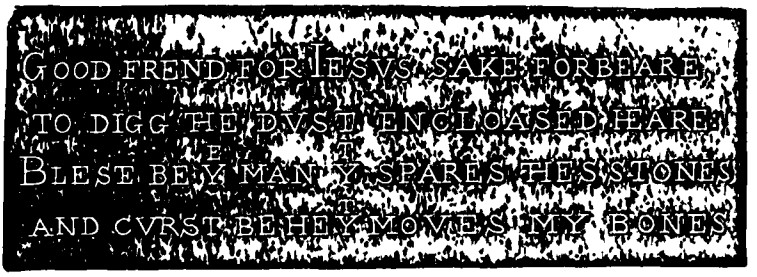
Item, for Paulle the dier for leavinge mucke before his doore.
Wyddoe Roggers att the Bullringe for leavinge mucke in Swyenne streitt.
Goodmane Sannes for leavinge mucke in Swyenne streytte.
For Mr. Abraham Sturlie nott makinge cleane his soylle before his barne in Rather markett and mud waull in Henlie streytte.
Richard Burman for makinge a muckhill before his doore.
Edward Cottrill for makinge a muckhill in Rather markett.
Edward Bromlie for nott makinge cleane the churche waye before his barne by the water side.
Nicholis James for makinge a muckhill att the sheip streytts end.
Roger Marshalle for nott makinge cleane his soille before his door in the Sheip streytte.
Hamnett Sadler and George Warrane for nott makinge cleane the soille in Sheip streytte.
Henrye Smythe for nott makinge cleane the water couarsse before his barne in Chapple laine.
Johne Perrie for a muckhill in the Chapple laine.
Henrye Smythe for keipinge his swynne and duckes in the Chapple yarde.

† Autograph letter in the possession of W. O. Hunt, Esq.

‡ Perhaps it could be ascertained whether Drayton and Ben Jonson could have been at Stratford shortly before the death of Shakespeare. Drayton, it is

cary." This name is corrected to *Court* in a subsequent note, but I suspect he merely drew this conclusion from the circumstance of there being an apothecary of that name at Stratford in 1616, not from an actual statement that he had attended the poet.

Shakespeare was buried in the chancel of Stratford church, a few paces from that part of the wall against which the charnel-house was erected. A flat stone covers his remains, with the following inscription,—


GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOASED HEARE
BLESE BE YE MAN YT SPARES THES STONES
AND CVRST BE HE YT MOVES MY BONES

but the poet's name does not appear. No reasonable doubt, however, can be raised as to the fact of this being his last resting-place. It is parallel with the graves of the other members of the family, and Dugdale, in 1656, expressly states that "his body is buried" underneath this stone. The letter quoted at p. 88, asserts that this epitaph was "made by himselfe a little before his death," a late belief,

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well known, was a Warwickshire man, and he and Shakespeare are mentioned together in the following epigram on Dugdale,—

> Now, Stratford upon Avon, we would choose
> Thy gentle and ingenuous Shakespeare muse,
> Were he among the living yet, to raise
> T'our antiquaries merit some just praise:
> And sweet-tongu'd Drayton, that hath given renown
> Unto a poor (before) and obscure town,
> Harsull, were he not fal'n into his tombe,
> Would crown this work with an encomium.
> Our Warwickshire the heart of England is,
> As you most evidently have prov'd by this;
> Having it with more spirit dignifi'd
> Then all our English counties are beside.
>
> *Cokain's Small Poems*, 1658, pp. 111-112.

unnoticed earlier than 1693. It is unnecessary to say that such wretched doggrel never could have proceeded from Shakespeare's pen, yet those have not been wanting who have told us that they did so, and that his horror of the charnel-house, so near this spot, was the occasion of them. The Gothic doorway, within a few steps of Shakespeare's grave, opened into this building, which, says Ireland, "contains the greatest assemblage of human bones I ever saw." It is now pulled down, but Captain Saunders has fortunately preserved a very careful drawing of its interior, the most curious record of this charnel-house that has been preserved,—

Or shut me nightly in a charnel house,
O'er cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
With reaky shanks, and yellow chapless sculls,
Things that to hear them told have made me tremble.

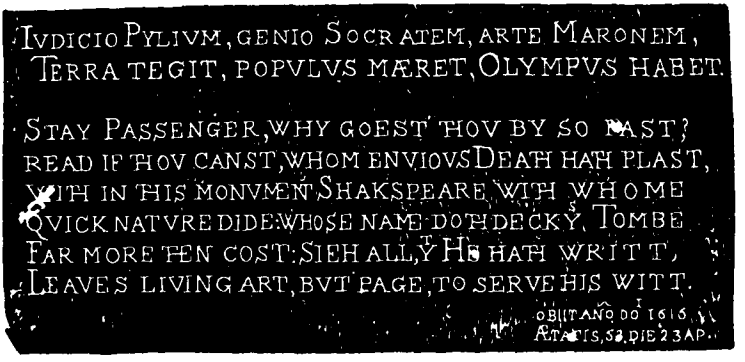
On the north wall of the chancel, elevated about five feet from the floor, is erected a monument to Shakespeare. He is represented with a cushion before him, a pen in his right hand, his left resting upon a scroll. This bust, says Wivell,

"is fixed under an arch, between two Corinthian columns of black marble, with gilded bases and capitals, supporting the entablature; above which, and surmounted by a death's head, are carved his arms; and on each side is a small figure in a sitting posture, one holding in his left hand a spade, and the other, whose eyes are closed, with an inverted torch in his left hand, the right resting upon a skull, as symbols of mortality." The monument was erected before 1623, for it is mentioned by Leonard Digges in some verses prefixed to the first folio; and it was executed by Gerard Johnson,* an eminent sculptor of that period. It was originally coloured, the eyes being represented as light hazel, the hair and beard auburn, the dress a scarlet doublet, over which was a loose black gown without sleeves. In 1748, it was repainted, the old colours being faithfully imitated; but in 1793, Malone caused it to be painted white, not delicately and artistically, but by a common house-painter, It is to be feared that this injudicious act has irretrievably lost to us some of the more characteristic features of the bust, and the regret is the greater, because no representation of the bard is so authentic. The portrait in the first folio, 1623, although it receives the tribute of rare Ben, written, it may be, before he saw the engraving, is not a creditable work of art, but it ranks next to the bust in point of authority, and a general resemblance is to be traced between them.† Several paintings of Shakespeare have been produced, but the genuineness of most of them may be doubted, for fabrication has been as industrious with the poet's likeness as with his autograph. The Chandos portrait, in the posses-

* "Shakspeares and John Combes monumts. at Stratford sup' Avon made by one Gerard Johnson."—*Dugdale's Diary*, 1653, 4to. ed. 1827, p. 99. This diary is printed from a series of interleaved almanacs preserved in the collection of Dugdale Stratford Dugdale, Esq., M.P. at Merevale, co. Warw.

† "Now if we compare this picture with the face on the Stratford monument, there will be found as great a resemblance as perhaps can well be betwixt a statue and a picture, except that the hair is described rather shorter and streighter on the latter than on the former."—*Gent. Mag.* 1759, p. 257.

sion of the Duke of Buckingham, is said to have been traced back to a former owner, Sir William Davenant, and as this can, I am told, be substantiated by evidence, the picture bears greater authenticity than any others that have been asserted to be original likenesses of the great bard. Knellef painted a picture of Shakespeare which he gave to Dryden, but no portrait which cannot be traced much nearer Shakespeare's time can be regarded as an original authority, and so little critical judgment was formerly displayed in such matters, that a painting of James I. was palmed upon Pope as a representation of the poet. The bust in the chancel of Stratford Church is beyond the reach of any such doubt, and is in no way assailable to hesitating criticism. It is at once the most interesting memorial of the dramatist that remains, and the only one that brings him before us in form and substance. There is a living and a mental likeness in this monument, one that grows upon us by contemplation, and makes us unwilling to accept any other resemblance.* Let us repeat the lines that are inscribed beneath this memorial (p. 87), and implore the reflective observer to pause before it,—


IVDICIO PYLIVM, GENIO SOCRATEM, ARTE MARONEM,
TERRA TEGIT, POPVLVS MÆRET, OLYMPVS HABET.

STAY PASSENGER, WHY GOEST THOV BY SO FAST?
READ IF THOV CANST, WHOM ENVIOVS DEATH HATH PLAST,
WITH IN THIS MONVMENT SHAKSPEARE: WITH WHOME
QVICK NATVRE DIDE WHOSE NAME DOTH DECKY TOMBE
FAR MORE THEN COST: SIEH ALL, Y HE HATH WRITT,
LEAVES LIVING ART, BVT PAGE, TO SERVE HIS WITT.

OBIIT ANO DO 1616
ÆTATIS 53 DIE 23 AP.

* The reader will find a woodcut of this bust at the commencement of the work, and, I believe, it is the first in which all the characteristic features of the original have been scrupulously expressed. Mr. Fairholt's pencil has ex-

I have elsewhere noticed a popular belief that Shakespeare's union was not productive of much social happiness, and an interlined clause in the will has unnecessarily tended to perpetuate this notion,—"Item, I gyve unto my wief my second best bed with the furniture." So far from this bequest being one of slight importance, and exhibiting small esteem, it was the usual mode of expressing a mark of great affection. The first bequest in the will of Joyce Hobday,* of Stratford, dated March 28th, 1602, is, "I geve and bequeth to my brother Rychard Ward of Warwycke my best fether bed, one boulster, a pillowe, and the best coveryng for a bed." Henry Harte, of Andover, whose will (in the Prerogative Office) was proved in 1586, gives "unto John Harte one bedde one the right hande comminge in at the doore in the Starr Chamber with all the furniture, and twoe other beddes, with twoe coverletts, and twoe bolsters, and twoe blanketts; item, I give to William Harte one bedd with all the furniture in the chamber called the Hallffe Moone." William Underhill, in his will dated 1595, proved in 1599, in the same office, bequeaths two similar legacies of beds, with their furniture to near relatives; and John Sadler, whose will is dated in 1625, gives and bequeaths "to my sone John Sadler of London the bed and whole furniture therunto belonging in the parlour where I lye." These instances might be multiplied, but what is here before us is quite sufficient to show that the ordinary opinion concerning this often-quoted bequest of Shakespeare to his wife is

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hibited to us every fold and wave of the garment, and the positions of the fingers and hands, which are extremely appropriate and beautiful in the original, are not well shown in any representation hitherto published.

* It should be remarked that this lady was possessed of considerable property, and that therefore the bequest here mentioned, which now appears so trivial, was not by any means the result of poverty. Similar entries occur in many other old wills. One other entry from this may be quoted: "Item, I geve and bequeth unto Fraunçis Smyth aforenamed a ffetherbed wyth the furnyture therof."

altogether erroneous. On equally uncertain grounds, it was alleged that the poet left his partner no provision for her life, and it was reserved for Mr. Knight to point out that she was provided for by dower. Thus each allegation on which the above-mentioned belief is founded has been dissipated. It has also been supposed that the poet in some respect neglected part of his family to found an inheritance of great magnitude for a favorite daughter, but it must be recollected no proof has yet been adduced of the manner in which he employed the very large sum he received for his shares in the Globe and Blackfriars theatres, and, in the absence of any direct evidence on the subject, it is not unreasonable to assume that it was expended for the benefit of his family.

None of the Hathaways are mentioned in Shakespeare's will, not even by the small remembrances with which the poet has honoured so many not related or connected with him; yet we cannot on this negative evidence conclude he was not on good terms with his wife's relatives. The only notice of any intercourse between Anne Shakespeare and the friends of her youth at Shottery is contained in the will of Thomas Whittington of that hamlet, who was shepherd to Anne's father, Richard Hathaway, in 1581. Whittington died in April, 1601,* and in his will, made a few days previously, and proved on April 29th, occurs the following:

Item, I geve and bequeth unto the poore people of Stratford xl.*s.* that is in the hand of Anne Shaxspere, wyfe unto Mr. Wyllyam Shaxspere, and is due debt unto me, beyng paid to mine executor by the sayd Wyllyam Shaxspere or his assignes according to the true meanyng of this my wyll.

A judicious bequest, not implying any want of friendship for the Shakespeares, but most likely considering that the owners of New Place were too wealthy to require such an

* "1601, April 10, Thomas Whitingtonn, shepard."—*Register of Burials for the Parish of Stratford on Avon.*

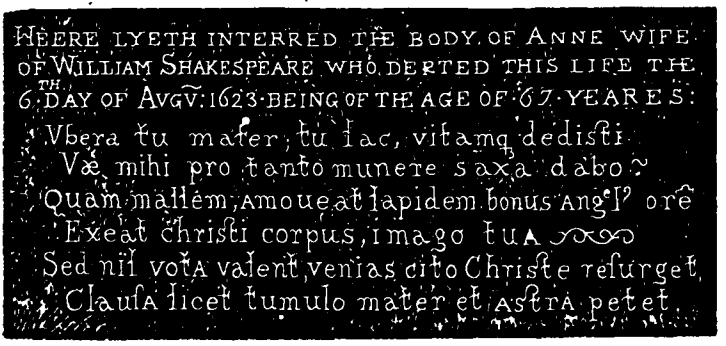
addition to their substance. It is worthy of remark that when Anne's father died, in 1582, he owed this person £4 6*s.* 8*d*, and it is most probable that the £5 was merely placed for security in the hands of Anne Shakespeare, as a person in whom Whittington had confidence. The principal value of the information this bequest affords is the glimpse it gives us of transactions between Shakespeare's wife and her early friends. Whittington also left twelve-pence to "Thomas Hathaway sonne to the late Margret Hathway," who may have been one of Anne Shakespeare's nephews; but the will of Richard Hathaway, her father, a very important document, which I have discovered in the Prerogative Office since my account of the family in the former part of this volume was printed, does not enable us to decide that question. I take the opportunity of introducing it in this place, merely remarking there is nothing unusual in the circumstance of all the members of the family not being mentioned, however much it is to be regretted that no notice of Anne Hathaway is there to be found. His daughter Joan, born in 1566, is also not alluded to.

In the name of God amen; The firste daie of September, in the yeare of oure Lorde God one thowsande fyve hundred eightie one, and in the three and twentithe yeare of thee raigne of oure soveraigne ladye Elizabethe, by the grace of God queene of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defender of the faithe, etc. I Richard Hathaway of Shottree in the perishe of Stratford uppon Avon in the countie of Warwick, husbandman, beinge sicke in bodye but of perfecte memorye, I thancke my Lord God, doe ordaine and make this my last will and testamente in manner and forme followinge. Firste, I bequeathe my sowle unto Allmightie God, trustinge to be saved by the meritts of Christes Passion, and my bodye to be buried in the churche or churche yarde of Stratforde aforesaide. Item, I give and bequeathe unto Thomas my sonne sixe poundes thirtene shillings fower pence, to be paide unto him at the age of twentie yeares. Item, I give and bequeath unto John my sonne sixe poundes thirtene shillings fower pence, to be paide unto him at the age of twentie yeares. Item, I give and bequeathe unto William my sonne tenne poundes to bee paide unto him at the age of twentie yeares. Item, I give and bequeathe unto Agnes my daughter sixe poundes thirtene shillinges fower pence, to be paide unto her at the daie of her marriage.

Item, I give and bequeathe unto Catherine my daughter sixe poundes thirtene shillinges fower pence, to be paide unto her at the daie of her marriage. Item, I give and bequeathe unto Margaret my daughter sixe pounds thirtene shillinges fower pence, to be paide unto her at the age of seaventene yeares. And if it fortune that any of my said sonnes or daughters before named, that is to saie, Thomas, John, William, Agnes, Catherine, or Margarett, to decease before theie receyve theire legacies, then my will is that the legacies of he or she so deceased to remayne equallie amonge the rest, and so unto the longest lyvers of theme. Item, my will is (withe consente of Jone my wife) that my eldiste sonne Barthellmewe shall have the use, commoditie and profytt, of one halfe yearde lande withe all pastures and meadowinge therto belonginge, withe appurtenaunces, to be tilled, mucked, and sowed at the charges of Joane my wyffe, he onelie findinge seede, duringe the naturall life or widdowehode of the same Johan my wife, to be severed from the other parte of my lande for his commoditie and profitte. And my will is that he the same Bartholomewe shalbe a guide to my saide wife in hir husbandrye, and also a comforte unto his bretherne and sisters to his power, Provided alwaies that if the saide Joane my wife shall at anye tyme or tymes at-after my decease goe aboute to disannull or to take awaye from my saide sonne Bartholomewe the foresaide half yarde lande withe the appurtenaunces, so that he doe not enjoye the commoditye and proffitte of the same, accordinge to the trewe meaninge of this my last will and testamente, then my will is that the sayde Joane my wief shall gyve delyver and paye unto my saide sonne Bartholomewe, within one yeare after any suche deniall or discharge the somme of fortie poundes of lawfull Englishe monney. Item, my will is that all the seelings in my hall howse, withe twoe wyned beddes in my parlor, shall contynewe and stande unremoved duringe thee naturall liffe or widowhode of Jone my wyffe, and the naturiall lief of Bartholomewe my sonne, and John my sonne, and the longest lyver of theme. Item, I gyve and bequeathe unto everie of my godchildrenne fower pence a peece of theme. Item, I gyve and bequeathe unto Agnes Hathway and Elizabeth Hathway, daughters unto Thomas Hathway, a sheepe a peece of theme. This bequest donne, debts paide, and legacies leavied, and my bodye honestlie buried, then I gyve and bequeathe all the rest of my goods moveable and unmoveable unto Joane my wief, whome I make my sole executrixe to see this my last will and testament trulye performed. And I desier my trustie frende and neighbours Stephen Burman and Fowlke Sandelles to be my supervisors of this my last will and testamente, and theie to have for theire paynes therin to be taken twelve pence apeece of theme. Witnesses, sir William Gilbard clark and curate in Stretforde, Richarde Burman, John Richardson, and John Hemynge, withe others. Signum Richardi Hathwaie testatoris. Debtes to be paide. Inprimis, I doe owe unto my neighbour John Pace fortye shillings. Item, I owe unto John Barber thirtie sixe shillings fower pence. Item, I owe unto Thomas Whittington, my sheepherd, fower poundes sixe shillings eight pence. Item, I owe unto Edwarde Hollyocke for woode twenty shillings.

[Probatum &c. nono die mensis Julii, 1582.]

The names of Sandells and Richardson, the bondsmen on the occasion of Shakespeare's marriage, occur in this document, and it will be seen that Anne's father was no more learned than her husband's, for he signs with a mark. It seems to be very doubtful whether Anne herself could write, for no evidence of her calligraphy has been produced, and we know that one of her brothers was not versed in that science. She survived Shakespeare several years, and was buried near him in the chancel of Stratford church, on August 8th, 1623.* A brass plate on the stone which covers her remains thus pays tribute to her religious worth:

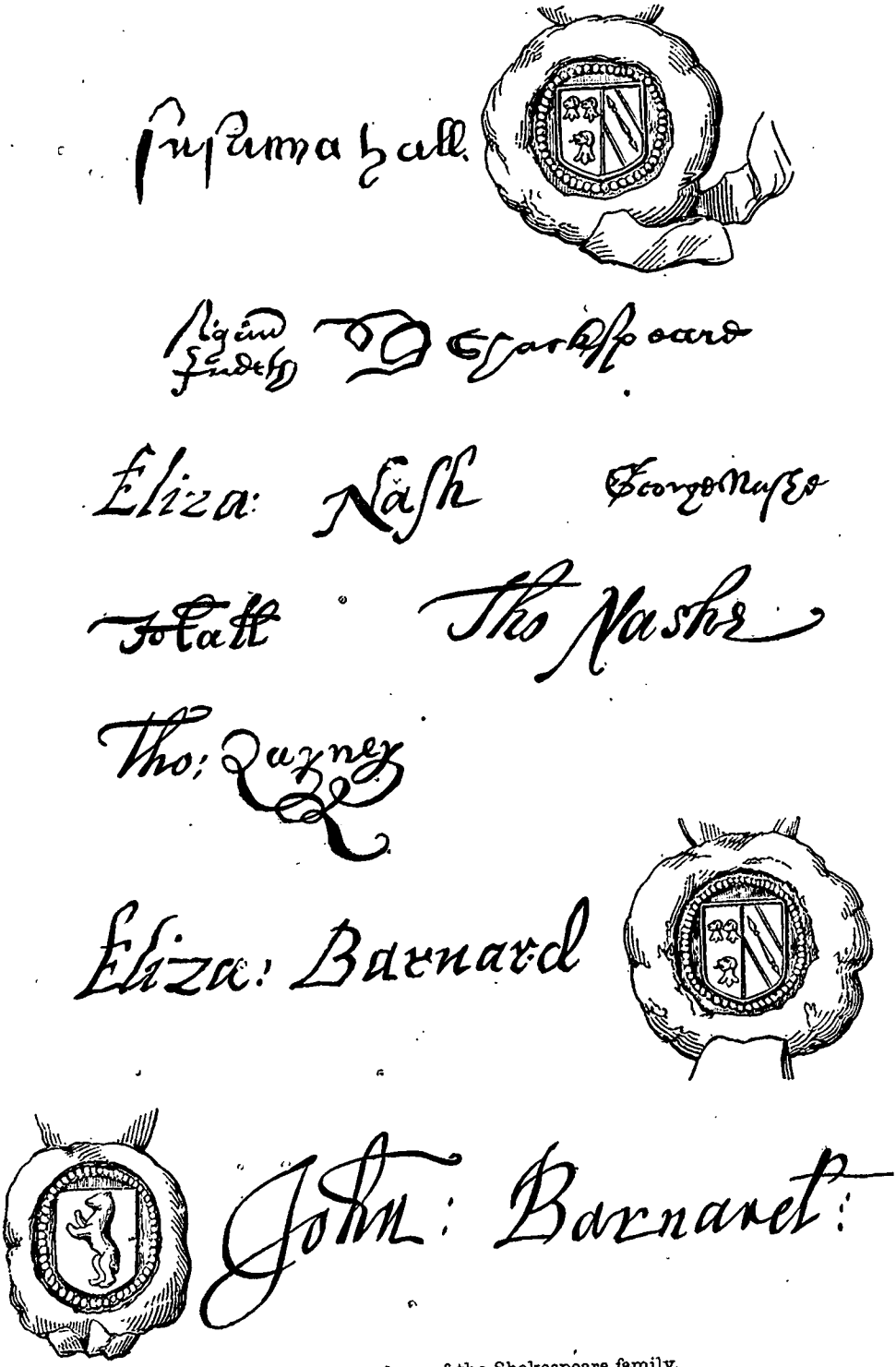

HEERE LYETH INTERRED THE BODY OF ANNE WIFE
OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE
6TH DAY OF AVGV: 1623 BEING OF THE AGE OF 67 YEARES:
Vbera tu mater, tu lac, vitamq; dedisti
Væ mihi pro tanto munere saxa dabo?
Quam mallem, amoueat lapidem bonus Angel' ore
Exeat christi corpus, imago tua
Sed nil vota valent, venias cito Christe resurget,
Clausa licet tumulo mater et astra petet.

The gravestones of the Shakespeare family are in a row with this, facing the rail of the altar. That of Anne Shakespeare is immediately beneath the poet's monument; next comes the stone with the verses, "Good friend," &c., and next to that are inscriptions to the memory of Thomas Nash, who married the only daughter of Susanna Hall; Dr. John Hall, son-in-law to the dramatist; and Susanna Hall, Shakespeare's favorite daughter, in the following order:

* "1616, Apr. 25, Will. Shakspere, gent.—1623, Aug. 8, Mrs. Shakspeare." —*Parish Register of Stratford.*

HEERE LYETH Y^E^ BODY OF SVSANNA, WIFE TO IOHN HALL GENT: Y^E^ DAVGHTER OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, GENT: SHEE DECEASED Y^E^ 11th OF IVLY, A^O^ 1649, AGED 66. Witty above her sexe, but that's not all, Wise to Salvation was good Mistris Hall: Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse. Then, Passenger, ha'st no're a teare, To weepe with her that wept with all? That wept, yet set herself to cheere Them up with comforts cordiall. Her love shall live, her mercy spread, When thou ha'st no're a teare to shed.	HEERE LYETH Y^E^ BODY OF IOHN HALL, GENT: HEE MARR: SVSANNA, Y^E^ DAVGHTER & *coheire* OF WILL: SHAKESPEARE, GENT. HEE DECEASED NOVE^R^. 25. A^O^ 1635, AGED 60. Hallius hic situs est, medica celeberrimus arte; Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei; Dignus erat meritis, qui Nestora vinceret annis; In tegris omnes, sed rapit æqua dies. Ne tumulo, quid desit, adest dilectus conjux, Et vitæ comitem nunc quoq. mortis habet.	HEERE RESTETH Y^E^ BODY OF THOMAS NASHE, ESQ. HE MAR. ELIZABETH, THE DAVG: & HEIRE OF IOHN HALLE, GENT. HE DIED APRILL 4, A. 1647, AGED 53. Fata manent omnes, huno non virtute carentem vt neque diuitiis, abstulit atra dies: Abstulit; at referet lux victima; iste viator, si peritura para, per mala parta peris.

The verses on the tombstone of Mrs. Hall were obliterated many years ago to make room for an inscription on some one else, but they had fortunately been preserved by Dugdale, and have recently been judiciously restored. For this welcome service we are indebted to the taste and liberality of the Rev. W. Harness. Mrs. Hall was buried on July 16th, 1649, "July 16, Mrs. Susanna Hall widow." At Shakespeare's death, in 1616, his family consisted of his wife, his daughter Susanna, married to Dr. Hall, his daughter Judith, married to Thomas Quiny, and Elizabeth Hall, a grand-daughter. Judith Quiny had several children, who were all dead in 1639 (p. 31); she herself living till 1662. The poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall, was married in 1626 to Thomas Nash, who died in 1647, without issue; and secondly, in 1649, to John Barnard, of Abington, co. Northampton, by whom she had no family. She died in 1670, and with her the lineal descent from Shakespeare perished. The persons who now claim to be the poet's descendants belong to the Hart family, into which Joan, Shakespeare's sister, married.



Signatures of members of the Shakespeare family.

Susanna Hall was only tenant for life of the freehold estates under her father's will, which were strictly entailed on her male issue, with several remainders. Before many years had elapsed this property suffered the infliction of many legal fictions, the entail was barred, and the estates dispersed. The whole history of it will be correctly gathered from the documents inserted in the Appendix.

The preceding pages furnish the reader with all evidence of any importance respecting the personal history of Shakespeare that has yet been discovered, and, considering how deficient the lives of authors generally are in those striking events which most attract the notice and commemoration of contemporaries, it would not have been surprising had even less information regarding him been preserved. It has, however, been asserted we know so little of the poet's life, that his past existence is scarcely more determined than that of Homer; and this opinion has been repeated by the latest biographers. Perhaps the collection of facts here brought together will at least tend to modify this prevalent belief. The character of Shakespeare is even better substantiated than his history. We have direct and undeniable proofs that he was prudent and active in the business of life, judicious and honest, possessing great conversational talent,* universally esteemed as gentle and amiable;† yet

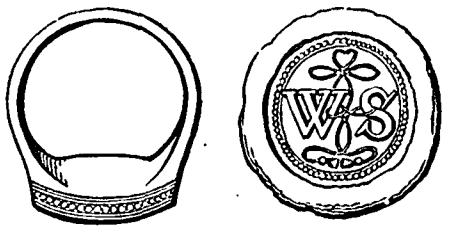
* "His conversation was admir'd by some of the greatest men in his own time."—*Oldys, MS. Notes to Langbaine.* See p. 183.

† Twice does Ben Jonson give testimony of this, in his 'Discoveries,' and in the lines prefixed to the first folio, where he says Shakespeare's "well-turned and true-filed lines" reflected his mind and manners. The following lines by a contemporary confirm these tributes:

> If Pride ascende the stage, O base ascent,
> Al men may see her, for nought comes thereon
> But to be seene, and where Vice should be shent,
> Yea, made most odious to ev'ry one
> In blazing her by demonstration,

Then

more desirous of accumulating property than increasing his reputation, and occasionally indulging in courses "irregular and wild," but not incompatible with this generic summary. It is unnecessary to repeat the various statements of early writers on this subject, for all of them have been already quoted and specially pointed out to the reader's attention. Still less requisite is it to pronounce any eulogy on the writer to whose history these pages refer, for his place in the temple of Fame is irrevocably fixed, and his works are no longer affected by praise or censure. May the shadow of that name protect the minute detail the memory of no other author would deserve!



Shakespeare's seal-ring.

Then Pride, that is more then most vicious,
Should there endure open damnation;
And so shee doth, for shee's most odious,
In men most base that are ambitious.

Players, I love yee, and your qualitie,
As ye are men that pass-time not abus'd:
And [W. S. R. B.] some I love for painting, poesie,
And say fell Fortune cannot be excus'd,
That hath for better uses you refus'd:
Wit, courage, good-shape, good partes, and all good,
As long as al these goods are no worse us'd;
And though the stage doth staine pure gentle bloud,
Yet generous yee are in minde and moode.

Davies' Microcosmos, 4to. 1603, p. 215.

APPENDIX.

I.—*Sale of the Tithes left by Shakespeare to Hall,* 1625.

THIS Indenture, made the first day of Marche, in the yeare of the rayne of our Sovereign Lord James, by the grace of God of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Kinge, Defendor of the Faith, etc., the two and twentieth, and of Scotland the eight and fiftieth, Between John Hall of Stratford upon Avon, in the countie of Warwick, gente., on the one partie, and Frauncis Smith of the Burrowe of Stratford aforesaid, Danyell Baker of the same, gente., Frauncis Aynge of the same, gente., and Anthony Smith of the same, gente., on the other partie: Witnesseth, that whereas Anthony Barker, clarke, late warden of the late Colledge or Collegiate Church of Stratford upon Avon, in the said countie of Warwick, and Gyles Coventree, sub-warden there, and the whole chapter of the same late colledge, by their deed, indented, sealed with there chapter seal, dated the seaventh day of September, in the six and thirtieth yeare of the raigne of the late King of famous memorie, King Henrie the Eighte, demised, graunted, and to farme lett, amongst divers other things, unto one William Barker, of Sonnynge, in the countie of Bark, gente., all and all manner of tythes of corne, grayne, blade, and hey yearlie, and from tyme to tyme comeinge, encreaseinge, reneweinge, arriseinge, groweinge, yssueinge, or happeninge, or to be had, received, perceived, or taken oute, upon, off, or in the townes, villages, hamletts, grounds, and fields of Stratford upon Avon, Olde Stratford, Wellcombe, and Bishopton, in the said Countie of Warwick; and also all and all manner of tythes of wooll, lambe, and other small and privye tythes, oblacions, obvencions, alterages, mynuments, and offerings whatsoever, yearlie and from tyme to tyme encreaseinge, renewinge, or happeninge, or to be had, received, perceived, or taken, within the parish of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, in the said countie of Warwick, by the name or names of all and singular there mannors, lands, tenements, meadows, pastures, feedings, woods, underwoods, yearelie rents, revercions, services, courts, leits, releeves, wards, marriages, harriotts, perquisites of courtes, liberties, jurisdicions, and all other hereditaments, with all and singular other rights, commodities, and there appurtenaunces, together with all and all manner of persoenages, glebe lands, tythes, alterages,

oblacions, obvencions, mynuments, offerings, and all other yssues, proffitts, emoluments, and advantages, in the countie of Warwick or Worcester, or elsewhere whatsoever they be, unto the said then colledge apperteincinge, the maunsion house, and scyte of the said colledge, with their appurtenances, within the precincts of the wall of the said colledge, unto the warden and sub-warden only excepted, To have and to holde all the said mannors, lands, tenements, and all other the premisses, with all and singular their appurtenances (except before excepted), unto the said colledge belongeinge, or in anywyse appertaininge, unto the said William Barker, his executors and assigns, from the feaste of St. Michall tharchangell then laste paste before the date of the said indenture, unto thende and term of fourscore and twelve years thence nexte ensueinge, yeldeinge and payinge therefore yearlie unto the said warden and subwarden, and their successors att the said colledge, one hundred twentie two pounds eighteen shillings nyne pence of lawfull money of England, as more playnelie appeareth by the said indenture. And whereas alsoe the revercion of all and singular the said premisses, amongst other things, by virtue of the Acte of Parliament made in the first yeare of the rayne of the late soveraigne lord Kinge Edward the Sixth, for the dissolution of chauntries, colledges, and free chappells, or by some other meanes, came to the hands and possession of the said late Kinge Edward, and whereas the said late Kinge Edward the Sixth being seised, as in righte of his crowne of England, of and in the revercion of all and singular the premisses, by his lettres pattents, beareinge date the eighte and twentieth day of June, in the seaventh yeare of his raigne, for the consideration therein expressed, did give and graunte unto the bayliffe and burgesses of Stratford aforesaid, and to there successors, amongste other things, all and all manner of the said tythes of corne, grayne, and hey, cominge, encreaseinge, or arryseinge in the village and fields of Olde Stratford, Wellcombe, and Bishopton aforesaid, in the said countie of Warwick, then or late in the tenure of John Barker, and to the late colledge of Stratford upon Avon, in the said countie of Warwick, of late belongeing and appertainin , and parcell of the possession thereof beinge, and alsoe all and all manner of the said tythes of wooll, lambe, and other small and privie tythes, oblacions, and alterages whatsoever, within the parish of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, and to the said late colledge of Stratford upon Avon belongeinge or apperteineinge, and then late in the tenure of William Barker, or of his assigns, and the revercions and revercions whatsoever of all and singular the said tythes, and every part and parcell thereof, and all rents, revenues, and other yearlie proffitts whatsoever reserved upon any demise or graunte of the said tythes, or any part or parcell thereof. And whereas alsoe the interests of the said premisses in the said originall lease mentioned, and the interests of certaine coppyholders in Shotterie, in the parish of Stratford aforesaid, beinge by good and lawful conveyance and assurance in lawe before that tyme conveyed and assured unto one John Barker, of Hurste, in the said countie of Bark, he, the said John Barker, by his indenture beareinge date the four and twentieth day of June, in the two and twentieth yeare of the raine of the late Queen Elizabeth, for the considera-

tions therein speciefied, did give, graunte, assigne, and sett over unto Sir John Huband, knighte, all and singular the said laste mencioned premisses, and all his estate, righte, title, and intereste, that he then had to come of and in and to all and singular the said premisses, and all other mannors, messuages, lands, tenements, glebe lands, tythes, oblacions, commodities, and profitts in the said originall lease mencioned, for and dureing all the years and terme then to come unexpired in the said originall lease conteined or specified (excepting as in and by the said last mencioned indenture is excepted), as by the same indenture more at large may appeare; To have and to holde all and singular the said recyted premisses, except before excepted, to the said Sir John Huband, his executors and assignes, for and dureing the yeares then to come of and in the same, yeldinge and payinge therefore yearlie, after the feaste of St. Michall tharchangell next ensuinge the date of the said laste mencioned indenture, for and duringe all the years mencioned in the said first mencioned indenture then to come and not expired, unto the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assigns, one annuall or yearlie rente of twentie seaven pounds thirteen shillings four pence by the yeare, to be issuing and goeing out of all the mannors, lands, tenements, tythes, and hereditaments, in the said indenture specified to be paid yearlie unto the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assignes, by the said Sir John Huband, his executors, administrators, and assignes, at the feaste of thannunciation of our Ladie and St. Michall tharchangell, or within fortie dayes after the said feaste, in the porch of the parish church of Stratford aforesaid, by even portions; and further payinge, doeinge, and performinge all such other rents, duties, and service as att any tyme from thenceforth, and from tyme to tyme for and dureing the term aforesaid, shoulde become due to any person or persons for the same premisses, or any parte thereof, and thereof discharge the said John Barker, his executors and assignes; and yf it should happen the said twentie seaven pounds thirteen shillings four pence to be behinde and unpaid in parte or in all by the space of fortie dayes nexte after any of the said feasts or days of payment in which, as is aforesaid, it ought to be paid, beinge lawfullie asked, that then yt shoulde be lawfull for the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assignes, into all and singular the premisses, with their appurtenances, and everie parte and parcell thereof, to reenter, and the same to have againe as in his or their former righte; and that then and from thenceforth the said recyted indenture of assignment, and everie article, covenant, clause, provisoe, and agreement therein contained, on the parte and behalf of the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, and assignes, to be performed, should cease and be utterlie voyd and of none effecte, with divers other covenants, graunts, articles, and agreements in the said indenture of assignment specified to be observed, and performed by the said Sir John Huband, his executors and assignes, as in and by the said recyted indenture it doeth and may appeare. And whereas the said Sir John Huband did, by his deed obligatorie, bynd himself and his heires to the said John Barker in a greate sum of money for the performance of all and singular the covenants, graunts, articles, and agree-

ments which, on the parte of the said Sir John Huband weare to be observed and performed, conteined and specified, as well in the said recyted indenture of assignment, as alsoe in one other indenture bearing the date of the said recyted indenture of assignment, made betweene the said John Barker on the one parte, and the said Sir John Huband on the other parte, as by the said deed obligatorie more at large it doeth and may appeare. And whereas alsoe the said Sir John Huband, by his laste will and testament in writeing, did give and bequeth unto his executors amongst other things the moietie, or one half of all and singular the said tythes, as well grate as smail before mencioned, to be graunted to the said bayliffe and burgesses of Stratford, for and dueringe soe long tyme, and untill of the issues and profitts thereof, soe much, as with other things in his said will to that purpose willed, lymitted, or appoynted, should be sufficiente to discharge, beare, and pay his funeral debts and legasies; and alsoe by his said laste will and testament did give and bequeth the other moitie or one halfe of the said tythes unto Raphe Huband his brother, and his assignes, duering all the yeares to come in the said first mencioned indenture and not expired, paying the one halfe of the rents and other charge due, or going out of or for the same (that is to say), the one halfe of tenn poundes a yeare to be paid to the said John Barker over and above the rente thereof reserved upon the said originall lease for the same, as by the said will and testament more playnelie appeareth. And whereas the said Raphe Huband, by his indenture of graunte and assignment, bearinge date the four and twentieth day of Julie, in the yeare of the raigne of our sovereigne lord James, now Kinge over England the third, and of Scotland the eighte and thirtieth, made between him the said Raphe Huband, by the name of Raphe Huband, esquier, on the one partie, and William Shakespere, of Stratford upon Avon, in the countie of Warwick, gente., on the other partie, did, for good causes and valuable consideracions in the said indenture specified, demise, graunte, assigne, and sett over unto the said William Shakespere, his executors and assignes, the moitie, or one half of all and singular the said tythes of corne, grayne, blade, and hey yearlie, from tyme to tyme cominge, encreaseinge, renewinge, ariseinge, groweinge, yssueinge, or happeninge, or to be had, received, perceived, or taken out of, upon, or in the townes, villages, hamletts, grounds, and fields of Stratford, Old Stratford, Wellcombe, and Bishopton aforesaid, in the said countie of Warwick, and alsoe the moitie or one halfe of all and singular the said tythes of wooll, lambe, and other small and privie tythes, herbage, oblacions, obvencions, altarages, mynuments, and offerings whatsoever, yearlie, and from tyme to tyme comeing, encreaseing, reneweing, or happening, or to be had, received, perceived, or taken within the parish of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid; and also that moitie, or one halfe of all and all manner of tythes, as well great as small whatsoever, which was by the last will and testament of the said Sir John Huband given and bequethed to the said Raphe Huband, arriseinge, encreaseinge, reneweinge, or groweinge within the said parish of Stratford upon Avon, and whereof the said Raphe Huband hath att any tyme herctofore beene, or of right ought to have beene possessed, or whereunto he then had, or at any tyme

thereafter should have, any estate, righte, or intereste in possession or revercion, and all thestate, righte, tytle, intereste, terme, clayme, or demand whatsoever of the said Raphe Huband, of, in, and to all and singular the premises lastelie mencioned to be graunted and assigned, and evrie or any part or parcell thereof, and the revercion and revercions of all and singular the said premisses, and all and singular rents and yearlie proffitts reserved upon any demist, graunte, or assignment thereof, or of any parte or partes thereof made (the privie tythes of Ludington, and such parte of the tythe, hey, and privie tythes of Bishopton, as of righte doe belonge to the vicar, curate, or minister there for the tyme being always excepted and foreprised): To have and to holde all and evrie the said moities, or one half of all and singular the said tythes, before, in, and by these presents lastly mencioned to be graunted and assigned, and everie part and parcell of them, and evrie of them, and all thestate, righte, tytle, and intereste of the said Raphe Huband, of, in, and to the same, and all other thafore demised premisses, and evrie parte and parcell thereof (excepte before excepted), unto the said William Shakespere, his executors and assignes, from the day of the date of the said indenture, for and duering the residue of the said terme of fourscore and twelve yeares in the said first recyted indenture mencioned, and for such and soe long terme and tyme, and in as large, ample, and beneficiall manner as the said Raphe Huband should or might enjoye the same, yeldinge and payinge therefore yearlie, dureinge the residue of the said terme of fourscore and twelve years which be yett to come and unexpired, the rente hereafter mencioned, in manner and forme following, that is to say, to the said bayliffe and burgesses of Stratford aforesaid, and their successors, the yearlie rente of seaventeen pounds, at the feaste of St. Michall tharchangell and thannunciation of blessed Marie the Virgyn by equal porcions, and unto the saide John Barker, his executors, administrators, or assignes, the annuall or yearlie rente of five pounds at the feaste dayes and place lymitted, appointed, and mencioned in the said recyted indenture of assignment made by the said John Barker, or within fortie dayes after the said feaste dayes, by even porcions, as parcell of the said annuall rente of twentie seaven pounds thirteen shillings four pence in the said assignmente mencioned. And whereas the said William Shakespere, being possessed of the said moitie, or parcell of the said tythes, to him soe graunted and assigned by the said Raphe Huband, by his laste will and testament, bearing date the fyve and twentieth day of March, in the yeare of the raigne of our Sovereign Lord James, now Kinge over England the fowerteenth, of Scotland the nyne and ffortythe, did devise and will unto the said John Hall and Susanna his wife all the said moitye, or one halfe parte of the said tythes to him soe graunted or assigned by the said Raphe Huband, together with all his estate and terme of years therein then to come and unexpired; by force and virtue whereof, or some other good assurance in lawe, the said John Hall and Susanna doe, or one of them doeth, nowe stand lawfullie estated and possessed of the said moitie of all and everie the said tythes for and duering the resydue of the said tyme of fourscore and twelve yeares yett to come and not expired, Now this indenture witnesseth that the said John Hall, for, and

in consideration of the sum of foure hundred pounds of lawfull money of England, to his hands paid by the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, before theire sealeinge and deliverye hereof well and trulie contented and paid, whereof, and of everie parte and parcell whereof, he, the said John Hall, doeth, by these presents, acknowledge the receipte, and thereof, and of evrie parte and parcell thereof, doethe severallie exonerate, acquit, and discharge the said Francis Smith, Danyell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors and administrators for ever, by these presents hath demised, graunted, assigned, and sett over, and by these presents doethe demise, graunte, assigne, and sett over unto the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors and assignes, all the said moietie, or one halfe of all and singular the said tythes of corne, grayne, blade, and hey yearlie, and from tyme to tyme comeinge, encreaseinge, reneweinge, arriseinge, groweing, yssueinge, or happeninge, or to be had, received, perceived, or taken oute of, upon, or in the townes, villages, hamletts, groundes, and fields of Stratford, Old Stratford, Wellcombe, and Bishopton aforesaid, in the said Countie of Warwick, the tythes of two closes late leased to William Combe, esquier, att the yearlie rente of twentie shillings excepted; and alsoe the said John Hall, by these presents, doth graunte, assigne, and sett over the moitie, or one halfe of all and singular the said tythes of wooll, lambe, and other small and privie tythes, herbage, oblacions, obvencions, altarages, mynuments, and offerings whatsoever yearlie, and from tyme to tyme comeinge, encreaseinge, reneweinge, or happening, or to be had, receivede, perceived, or taken within the parish of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid; and alsoe all that moitie, or one halfe of all and all manner of tythes, as well greate as small whatsoever, which was by the laste will and testament of the saide Sir John Huband, given and bequethed unto the said Raphe Huband, arriseinge, encreaseinge, reneweinge, or groweinge within the said parish of Stratford upon Avon, and whereof the said Raphe Huband hath att any tyme heretofore bene, or of righte ought to have bene possessed, or whereunto the said John Hall and Susanna, or either of them nowe hath, or have, or att any tyme hereafter shall, or oughte to have, any estate, righte, terme, estate, or intereste, in possession or revercion, and all the estate, righte, title, intereste, terme, clayme, and demand whatsoever, of the said John and Susanna, or which of righte belongeth to there said testator's estate, or which they have, or either of them hath, as executor or executors of the last will and testament of the said William Shakespere, of, in, or to all and singular the premisses and tythes hereby lastlie mencioned to be graunted or assigned, and every or any parte or parcell thereof, and the revercion of all and singular the said tythes and premisses, with the said yearlie rente or sume of twentie shillings reserved upon the said lease made to the said William Combe, and all and singular rentes and yearlie profitts reserved upon any demise, graunte, or assignment of any parte or partes thereof heretofore made, the privie tythes of Ludington, and such parte of the tithe hey, and privie tythes of Bishopton as of righte doe belonge unto the vicar, curate, or minister for the tyme being, and the said tythes of the said

two closes leased unto the said William Combe, alwaies excepted and foreprized: To have and to holde all and everie the said moities, or one halfe of all and singular the said tythes, and evrie parte and parcell of them, and everie of them, and all the premisses by the said William Shakespere devised, and all the estate, righte, tytle, and intereste of the said John and Susanna of, in, or to the same, and all other the afore-demised premisses, and everie parte and parcell thereof (except before excepted), unto the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors and assignes, for and duringe the resydue of the said fourscore and twelve yeares in the said firste recyted indenture mencioned, and for such and soe long tyme, and in as large, ample, and beneficiall manner and forme as the saide John and Susanna Hall, or either of them, shoulde or oughte to enjoye the same, by force and virtue of the laste will and testament of the said William Shakespere, or his executor or executors thereof, yeldinge and payinge therefore yearlie, duringe the resydue of the said terme of fourscore and twelve years which bee yett to come and unexpired, the rents hereafter mencioned, in manner and forme followinge; that is to say, to the bayliffs and burgesses of Stratford aforesaid, and there successors, the yearlie rente of seaventeene pounds, att the feaste of Ste. Michall tharchangell and thannunciation of Blessed Marie the Virgyn, by even porcions, and unto the said John Barker, his executors, administrators, or assignes, the annuall or yearlie rente of five poundes, att the feaste dayes and place lymitted or mencioned in the said recyted indenture of assignmente made by the said John Barker, or within fortie dayes after the said feaste dayes, by even porcions, as parcell of the saide annuall rente of twentie seaven poundes thirteene shillings four pence in the said assignmente mencioned. And the said John Hall, for hym, his heirs, executors, and assignes, doethe by these presents coveynante and graunte to and with the said Francis Smith, Danyell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors, administrators, and assignes, that he the saide John Hall, at the tyme of there sealeinge and delivering of these presents, notwithstandinge any acte or thinge by him the said John, and Susanna his wife, or the said William Shakespere, done, suffered, or assented unto to the contrarie, hath, and att the tyme of the firste execution or intencion of any execucion, of any estate by force of these presents, shall have full power, and lawfull and sufficyente awethoritie, certeinelie, surelie, and absolutelie to graunte, demyse, assigne, and sett over, all and everie the saide moeties, or one halfe of all and singular the saide tythes, and other the premisses heretofore graunted as aforesaid to the said William Shakespeere by the said Raphe Huband (excepte before excepted), which moeties (excepte before excepted) are mencioned to be assigned and sett over, and evrie parte and parcell thereof, unto the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthonye Smith, their executors and assignes, accordinge to the true entente and meaninge of these presents. And alsoe that the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthonye Smith, their executors, administrators, and assignes, shall and may from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes dureinge the resydue of the said fourscore and twelve yeares

yett to come and unexpired, for the yearlie severall rents above by these presents mencioned to be reserved, notwithstandinge any such acte or thing done, or suffered to the contrarye, by the said John, Susanna, or William Shakespeere, peaceablelie, lawfullie, and quietlie have, holde, occupye, possess, and enjoye, all and everie the said moities, or one halfe of all and singuler the saide tythes of corne, grayne, blade, hey, wooll, and lambe, and other smalle and privie tythes, alterages, oblacions, obvencions, offerings, and other the premisses; which moeties are by these presents graunted and assigned, and everie parte and parcell thereof, excepte before excepted, withoute any lett, trouble, entric, distresse, blayme, denyall, interupcion, or molestacion whatsoever, of the said John Hall, his executors, administrators, or assignes, Susanna his wife, or of any other person or persons whatsoever haveing, or clayming to have, or which att any tyme or tymes hereafter shall or may have, or clayme to have, any thing of, in, or to the afore graunted premisses, or any parte thereof, by, from, or under the said John Hall, his executors, administrators, or assignes, the said William Shakespeere, his executors, administrators, or assignes, or any of them, or by there or any of there meanes, consente, acte, assente, privitie, sufferance, neglecte, or procuremente, thestate and intereste of the Lord Carew, of, in, and to the tythes of Bridgetowne, and Ryen Clifford excepted, and oute of these presents foreprised. And the said John Hall, for them, his heirs, executors, administrators, and assignes, doeth covenante and graunte to and with the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthonye Smith, there executors, administrators, and assignes, that all and everie the said moities of the said tythes, which moities are before mencioned to be graunted to the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, and other the premisses, excepte before excepted, now are and be, from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes hereafter, dueringe the resydue of the said fourscore and twelve yeares yett to come and unexpired, accordinge to the true meaninge hereof, shall remayne and contynue unto the said Francis, Daniell, Francis, and Anthonye Smith, there executors and assignes, free and cleere, and freelie and cleerlie acquited, exonerated, and discharged, or well and sufficientlie saved and kept harmeles of and from all and all manner of bargaines, sailes, guifts, assignments, leases, recognizances, statute merchaunt, and of the staple outelawries, judgements, execucions, tytles, troubles, charges, incombrances, and demands whatsoever heretofore had, made, done, comytted, omitted, assented unto, or suffered, or hereafter to be had, made, done, comitted, omitted or suffered by the said John Hall, Susanna his wife, or any of them, there, or any of there executors, administrators, or assignes, or any of them, or any person or persons whatsoever, claymeinge from, by, or under them, or any of them, or by there or any of there meanes, acte, tytle, graunte, forfeiture, consent or procuremente, excepte before exceptede. And alsoe that the said John Hall, his executors, administrators, and assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes hereafter, dureinge the space of five yeares nexte ensueinge the date hereof, upon reasoenable requeste, and att the coste and charge in the lawe of the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and

Anthonye Smith, there executors or assignes, doe performe and execute, and cause, permitt, and suffer to be done and performed, and executed, all and everye such further and reasonable acte and actes, thinge and things, demise and demises in the lawe whatsoever, be yt or they by any meanes, acte, course, devise or assurance in the lawe whatsoever, as by the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthonye Smith, their executors or assignes, or there or any of there learned counsell shall be reasonablie devised, advised, or required for the confirmacion of these presents, or for the further or more better or firmer assurance, suretie, suremakeing, and conveying of all and singular the premisses before by these presents demysed or assigned, or mente, or intended to be demised and assigned, and evrie parte and parcell thereof, unto the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors and assignes, dureinge all the resydue of the said terme of fourscore and twelve yeares yett to come and unexpired, according to the true intent and meaninge of these presents, soe as the said John Hall, his executors or assignes, be not thereby compelled to travell for the doeinge thereof out of the Countie of Warwick, nor to enter into any more ample, large or further warrantie than what is herein expressed. And the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, doe by these presents, for them and everie of them, there heires, executors, and administrators, covenant and graunte to and with the said John Hall, his executors, administrators, and assignes, and evrie of them, that they the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, their executors, administrators and assignes, shall and will, dureinge the resydue of the said fourscore and twelve yeares which be yett to come and unexpired, yearlie contente and pay the severall rents above mencioned, videlicet, seaventeene poundes yearlie to the bayliffe and burgesses of Stratford aforesaid, and five poundes to the said John Barker, his executors or assignes, att the dayes and places aforesaid on which that yt oughte to be paid, according to the purport and true meaninge of these presents dureinge the said terme, and thereof shall and will att all times hereafter discharge, save harmeles, and keep indemnyfied, the said John Hall and Susanna his wife, their executors, administrators, and assignes. And it is explayned, declared, and agreed, by and betweene the partes to these presents, that these present indentures, or any matter or thing herein conteined, shall not extend, or be of force, to compell the said John Hall, his heirs, executors, or administrators, or any of them, to any further or more large or more generall warrantie or acquittal then onelie against and from [anie] acte and thinge made, committed, or done, or wittinglie or willinglie sufferred to be done by him the said John Hall, Susanna his wife, and William Shakespere, or by them or any of them, or by there or any of there heirs, executors, administrators, or assignes. And furthermore this Indenture witnesseth, that whereas the said Raphe Huband did become bound to the said William Shakespere deceased, by one obligacion or writeinge obligatorie, bearinge date the four and twentieth daye of Julye, in the third yeare of the raigne of the Kings Majestie that nowe is over England, in the sume of eighte hundred

pounds of lawfull English money, to be payd unto the said William Shakespere, his executors, administrators, or assignes, or some of them, with condicion subscribed for the performance of the coveynants and agreements conteined in the said indenture of assignment made by the said Raphe unto the said William Shakespere, as by the said writeing obligatorie more at large dothe and maye appeare; and whereas the said bond is nowe come and accrewed unto the said John Hall and Susanna, or one of them, as executor or executors of the laste will and testament of the said William Shakespere, now the said John Hall, for and in consideration of the premisses, hathe bargained and solde, and by these presents doeth bargaine and sell unto the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, there executors, administrators, or assignes, the said obligacion or writeinge obligatorie of eighte hundred pounds aforesaid; and also, by these pressents doeth make, constitute, and in the place of him and the said Susanna, either and everie of them, putt the said Francis Smith, Daniell Baker, Francis Aynge, and Anthony Smith, his true and lawfull atturney in his name, or in the names of him and Susanna his wife, or either of them, and place to aske, deiliande, leavie, recovel', and receive of the said Raphe Huband, his heirs, executors, and administrators, and evrie of them, the said eighte hundred pounds in the said writinge obligatorie mencioned and expressed, soe soone as the said wrietinge obligatorie shall come forfeited; and alsoe, by these pressents, doeth give and graunte full power and awethoritie unto the saide Francis, Daniell, Francis, and Anthony, their executors, administrators, and assignes, to arreste, imprison, or cause to be arrested and condempned, the said Raphe Huband, his heirs, executors, and administrators, or any of them, upon the said bond obligatorie of eighte hundred pounds, and alsoe to procure judgemente and execucion to be had and made against the said Raphe, his heirs, executors, and administrators, and everie or any of them for the same, and release and releases, acquittance and acquittances to make, seale, and deliver unto them, and everie or any of them, of the same sum of eight hundred pounds, and one atturney or more for the doeing of the premisses, to make and the same to revoke and newe in his or there place to substitute, and to doe, perform, and execute all and singular thing and things needfull and necessary concerning the premisses soe fullie as he the said John Hall and Susanna or either of them could or mighte do, the same being personallie presente att the doeinge thereof; And the said John Hall, for him, his heirs, executors, and assignes, doeth further covenant, graunte, and agree, by these pressents to and with the said Francis, Daniell, Francis, and Anthony, and everie of them, there and everie of there executors and assignes, that neither he the said John, his executors nor assignes, nor the said Susanna, nor her executors or assignes, shall or will att any tyme hereafter release the said debte of eight hundred pounds, or any parte thereof, nor revoke, countermand, or annull this present lettre of atturney, nor any awethoritie hereby given, and that upon the receipte of the said sume of eighte hundred pounds, or any parte thereof, yt shall be lawfull to and for the said Francis, Daniell, Francis, and Anthony, there executors and assignes, to holde, deteine, and convert the same to there own proper uses, without any accompte thereof to be made or

yelded unto the said John or Susanna, their executors or assigns. In witnes whereof the parties above said to these indentures interchangeablelie there hands and seales have putt, the day and yeare first above written.

Jo. HALL.

Sealed and delyvered in the presence of

Henry Walker.
Tho. Lucas.
William Wyatt.
Jo. Greene.
Wm. Smith.
Richard Castell.
William Shawe.

Memorandum, that this deed or writinge was shewne forth to Anthony Smith and John Greene, gent., at the time of their examinacion taken before us, by virtue of a comission out of his Majesties High Court of Chancery to us directed, they being examined on the parte and behalfe of the bayliffe and burgesses of the Borough of Stratford upon Avon in the Countie of War., defendants at the suit of Thomas Wilson, clerk, and John Hall, gent., complainants, this 12th day of January, anno Domini 1634.

John Verney.
Edward Davies.
John Bridges.

II.—*Deed of Settlement of Shakespeare's Property*, 1639.

This indenture tripartite made the seaven and twentieth day of May, anno Domini 1639, and in the fifteenth yeare of the raigne of our soveraigne lord Charles, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, Fraunce and Ireland, Defendour of the Faith, &c. Betweene Susan Hall of Stratford upon Avon in the countie of Warwicke widdowe, Thomas Nash of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in the countie of Warwicke esq., and Elizabeth his wife, of the ffirst parte; George Nash of the borrough of Southwarke in the countie of Surrey gent., and Edmond Rawlins of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in the said countie of Warwicke gent., of the second parte; and George Townesend of Staple Inn in the countie of Middlesex gent., and John Stephens of Staple Inn aforesaid in the said countie of Middlesex gent., of the third parte, Witnesseth that the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, as well for the better barring and determynyng of an estate in taile heretofore made of all or some part of the messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments hereafter iff theis presents mencioned, and for the setling of all the same messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments hereafter in theis presents mencioned, to such uses

and in such manner as hereafter in theis presents is declared and mencioned, as also for divers and sundry other good causes and reasonable consideracions them the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash and Elizabeth his wife, hereunto specially moving, doe in and by theis presents for themselves, their heires, executors, and administrators, covenaunt promise and graunt to and with the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, their heires, executors, and administrators, by theis presents, that they the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, shall and will before the end of Trinitie Terme next ensuyng the date hereof, in and by one or more ffyne or ffynes to be levied with proclamacions, according to the forme of the statute in that case made and provided, by names and tearmes meete and convenient, recognize and acknowledge all that messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces, scituate and being in Blackffriers, London, neere the Wardrobe, now or late in the tenure or occupacion of . . . . Dicks, cordiner, and heretofore in the occupacion of one John Robinson; and all that one other messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces scituate and being in Acton in the countie of Middlesex, nowe or late in the occupacion of one . . . . Leerewood or his assignes; and all that capitall messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces scituate and being in Stratford upon Avon in the said countie of Warwicke, commonlie called or knowne by the name of the New Place; and all those two other messuages or tenements with thappurtenaunces scituate and bein in Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, in a certaine streete there called Henley streete, and nowe or late in the severall occupacions of Jane Hiccox and Johan Hart, widdowes; and all and singular howses, edifices, buildings, chambers, cellars, sollers, lights, easements, barnes, stables, backsides, orchards, gardens, profitts, and commodities whatsoever, to the said severall messuages or tenements or any of them belonging or in any wise apperteyning, or accepted, reputed, esteemed or taken as part, parcell, or number of the same, or any of them; and all those fower yards land and a halfe of arrable, meadowe and pasture, with thappurtenaunces, lying and being in the townes, hambletts, villages, feilds and grounds of Stratford upon Avon, Ould Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe, in the countie of Warwicke, and all other the messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments whatsoever, scituate lying and being in the townes, hambletts, villages, feilds and grounds of Stratford upon Avon, Ould Stratford, Bishopton and Welcombe, or any of them in the said countie of Warwicke, which heretofore were the inheritance of William Shakespeere gent. deceased, late father of the said Susan, to bee the right of the said George Nash, as those which the said George and Edmond shall have of the guift of the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, and the same shall remise and quite clayme for them and their heires unto the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, and to the heires of the said George Nash for ever. And the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, shall further by the same ffyne or ffynes graunt for them and their heires, that they shall warrant the said messuages or tenements, lands, and all and singular other the premisses, in the said ffyne or ffynes to bee comprised, to the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, and to the heires of the

said George Nash for ever. And it is covenaunted, graunted, concluded, and fullie agreed, by and betweene all the said parties to theis presents, that the said ffyne or ffynes to bee levied in manner and forme aforesaid, or in any other manner or forme, shallbe and shallbe deemed, accepted, reputed, adjudged and taken to bee, and the cognisee or cognisees in the said ffyne or ffynes to be named, and his and their heyres, immediatelie from and after the levyinge and ingrossing of the said ffyne or ffynes, shall stand and bee seised of and in the said messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments, in the said ffyne or ffynes to bee comprised, to the onlie use and behoofe of the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, their heires and assignes, for ever, and to none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever; to the end, intent, and purpose, that the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins may bee perfect tenants of the ffreehould and inheritance of all and singular the said messuages, lands, tenements, and premisses, against whome one or more common recovery or recoveries may bee had and suffered of all and singular the said premisses, according to the usuall forme of common recoveries, in such cases used and accustomed: And for that purpose, it is covenaunted, graunted, concluded, and fullie agreed, by and betweene the said parties to theis presents, that the said George Townsend and John Stephens, or one of them, shall and will before the end of the terme of St. . . . . next ensuyng the date of theis presents, pursue and prosecute one or more writt or writts of entry *sur disseisin in le post* against the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, whereby hee or they shall demaund the said messuages, lands, tenements, and all and singular other the premisses in the said ffyne or ffynes to bee comprised, against the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, to which writt or writts of entry *sur disseisin* the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins shall appeare and vouch to warrantie the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, who shall enter into the said warrantie, and shall vouch over the common vouchee, to the end and intent that one or more perfect recovery or recoveries may bee had and executed of the said messuages, lands, tenements, and all and singular other the premisses in the said ffyne or ffynes to bee comprised, according to the usuall manner and forme of common recoveries in such cases used and accustomed. And it is further covenaunted, graunted, concluded, and agreed, by and betweene the said parties to theis presents, that the said recoverie or recoveries so to be had, suffered, and executed, of the said messuages, and of all and singular other the said premisses in the said recoverie or recoveries to bee comprised, and the full force and execucion of the same, shalbee and enure, and shalbe adjudged, accepted, reputed and taken to bee and enure; and the said recoverer or recoverors, and his and their heires, immediatelie from and after the said recovery or recoveryes so had, suffered and executed, shall stand and bee seised of and in all and singular other the said messuages, lands and premisses, in the said recovery or recoveries to bee comprised, and of everie part and parcell of them and every of them, to the severall uses, intents, and purposes hereafter mencioned, That is to say, of for and concernyng the said messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces in Acton aforesaid, to the onely

use and behoofe of the said Thomas Nash and Elizabeth his wife, for and during the terme of their naturall lives and the life of the longest liver of them, and after their deceases to the use and behoofe of the heires of the bodies of the said Thomas Nash and Elizabeth his wife betweene them lawfullie to bee begotten, and for want of such issue, to the use and behoofe of the heires of the bodie of the said Elizabeth lawfullie to bee begotten, and for want of such issue, to the use and behoofe of the said Thomas Nash, his heires and assignes for ever; and of for and concerning all and singular other the messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever, whereof no use is herein before lymitted and declared, to the onelie use and behoofe of the said Susan Hall for and during the terme of her naturall life, and after her decease, to the use and behoofe of the said Thomas Nash and Elizabeth his wife for and during the terme of their naturall lives, and the life of the longest liver of them, and after their deceases, to the use and behoofe of the heires of the bodies of the said Thomas Nash and Elizabeth his wife betweene them lawfullie begotten or to bee begotten, and for default of such issue, to the use and behoofe of the heires of the bodie of the said Elizabeth lawfullie begotten or to bee begotten, and for default of such issue, to the use and behoofe of the said Thomas Nash and of his heires and assignes for ever, and to none other use or uses, intent or purpose whatsoever. In witnes whereof to one part of theis indentures remaynyng with the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, they the said George Nash, Edmond Rawlins, George Townesend, and John Stephens, have sett their hands and seales; and to another part thereof remaynyng with the said George Nash and Edmond Rawlins, they the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, George Townesend, and John Stephens, have sett their hands and seales; and to the other part thereof remaynyng with the said George Townesend and John Stephens, they the said Susan Hall, Thomas Nash, and Elizabeth his wife, George Nash, and Edmond Rawlins, have sett their hands and seales the day and yeare first above written.

III.—*Malone's Abstract of the Will of Thomas Nash.*

By his last will, which is in the Prerogative Office, dated August 26, 1642, he bequeathed to his well beloved wife, Elizabeth Nash, and her assigns, for her life (in lieu of jointure and thirds), one messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, situate in the Chapel Street in Stratford, then in the tenure and occupation of Joan Norman, widow; one meadow, known by the name of the Square Meadow with the appurtenances, in the parish of old Stratford, lying near unto the great stone bridge of Stratford; one other meadow with the appurtenances, known by the name of the Wash Meadow; one little meadow, with the appurtenances, adjoining to the said Wash Meadow; and also all the

tythes of the manor or lordship of Shottery. He devises to his kinsman Edward Nash, the son of his uncle George Nash of London, his heirs and assigns, *inter alia*, the messuage or tenement then in his own occupation, called the New Place, situate in the Chapel Street, in Stratford, together with all and singular houses, outhouses, barns, stables, orchards, gardens, easements, profits, or commodities, to the same belonging; and also four-yard land of arable land, meadow, and pasture, with the appurtenances, lying and being in the common fields of old Stratford, with all the easements, profits, commons, commodities and hereditaments, of the same four-yard lands belonging, then in the tenure, use, and occupation of him the said Thomas Nash; and one other messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, situate in the parish of . . . . in London, and called or known by the name of the Wardrobe, and then in the tenure, use and occupation of . . . . Dickes. And from and after the death of his said wife, he bequeaths the meadows above named, and devised to her for life, to his said cousin Edward Nash, his heirs and assigns for ever. After various other bequests, he directs that one hundred pounds, at the least, be laid out in mourning gowns, cloaks and apparel, to be distributed among his kindred and friends, in such manner as his executrix shall think fit. He appoints his wife Elizabeth Nash his residuary legatee, and sole executrix, and ordains Edmund Rawlins, William Smith, and John Easton overseers of his will, to which the witnesses are John Such, Michael Jonson, and Samuel Rawlins.

By a nuncupative codicil dated on the day of his death, April 4th, 1647, he bequeaths, *inter alia*, "to his mother Mrs. Hall fifty pounds; to Elizabeth Hathaway fifty pounds; to Thomas Hathaway fifty pounds; to Judith Hathaway ten pounds; to his uncle Nash and his aunt, his cousin Sadler and his wife, his cousin Richard Quiney and his wife, his cousin Thomas Quiney and his wife, twenty shillings each, to buy them rings." The meadows which by his will he had devised to his wife for life, he by this codicil devises to her, her heirs and assigns, for ever, to the end that they may not be severed from her own land, and he "appoints and declares that the inheritance of his land given to his cousin Edward Nash should be by him settled, after his decease, upon his son Thomas Nash, and his heirs, and for want of such heirs, then to remain and descend to his own right heirs.*

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* "Your said orator Symon Underhill about September in the sixth yeare of the late kings Majestyes raigne did contract and bargaine with one Thomas Nash, of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid esquier, for the sale of the said three closes in Stratford, and the said Thomas Nash did agree to pay unto your said orator for the purchase of the same three closes the somme of three hundred and fforty poundes; and your said oratour Symon Underhill did thereupon by good and sufficient conveyances and assurances in the lawe convey and assure the said three closes with thappurtenances unto the said Thomas Nash and his heires for ever . . . . . But the said Thomas Nash dying about flower yeares since, Elizabeth Nash widdow, the relict and executrix of the said Thomas Nash, entred upon the same three closes, and hath ever sithence quietly enjoyed the same."—*Bill in Chancery, May 10th*, 1650, *Tower Records.*

IV.—*Another Settlement of Shakespeare's Property*, 1647.

This indenture tripartite made the second day of June, in the three and twentieth yeare of the raigne of our Soveraigne Lord Charles, by the grace of God of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, king, Defender of the ffaith, &c. Betweene Susan Hall, of Stratford upon Avon in the county of Warwicke widow, and Elizabeth Nash of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in the said county of Warwicke widow, on the first part; Richard Lane of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid in the county of Warrickshire aforesaid gent., and William Smith of Balsall in the aforesaid county of Warwicke gent., on the seconde parte; William Hathaway of Weston upon Avon in the county of Glocester yeoman, and Thomas Hathway of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid joyner, on the third parte; Witnesseth that whereas the said Susan Hall and Elizabeth Nash, as well for the better barringe, cuttinge off, and dockinge of a remainder in fee simple limmited upon an estate taile, heretofore made of all the messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments hereafter in theis presents mencioned, to such uses and in such manner as in theis presents is specified and declared, as alsoe for divers and sundry other good causes and reāsonable consideracions them the said Susan Hall and Elizabeth Nash especially movinge, Did, in or aboute Easter Terme last past before the datē hereof, levy two severall ffynes with proclamacions accordinge to the forme of the statute in that case made and provided, by which said ffines they did recognize and acknowledge by names and termes meet, and convenient all that messuage or tenement with appurtenaunces scituate and beinge in Blackfryers, London, neere the Wardrope, then or late in the tenure or occupacion of John Dicks cordweyner; and all that capitall messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces scituate and beinge in Stratford upon Avon in the said county of Warwicke, commonly called or knowne by the name of the New Place; and all that messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces scituate and beinge in Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, in a certen streete there called Henley Streete, commonly called or knowne by the name of the Maidenhead, and now or late in the tenure of John Rutter or his assignes; and all that other messuage or tenement scituate and beinge in Henley Streete aforesaid, now or late in the tenure of Thomas Hart, and adjoyninge unto the said messuage or tenement called the Maidenhead, and all and singuler houses, edifices, buildings, chambers, cellers, sollers, lights, easements, barnes, stables, backsides, orchardes, gardens, profits, and commodities whatsoever to the said severall messuages or tenements or any of them belonginge or in any wise apperteyninge, or accepted, reputed, esteemed or taken as parte, parcell, or member of the same, or any of them; and all those fowre yards land and a halfe of arrable, meadowe, and pasture, with thappurtenaunces, lyinge and beinge in the townes, hambletts, villages, ffeilds, and grounds of Stratford upon Avon aforesaid, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe in the county of Warr., and all other the messuages, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever scituate, lyinge, and beinge in the townes, hamb-

letts, villages, feilds, and grounds of Stratford upon Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton, or Welcombe, or any of them, in the said countie of Warwicke, which heretofore were the inheritance of William Shakespere gent. deceased, late father of the said Susan, to bee the right of the said Richard Lane, as those which the said Richard Lane and William Smith had of the guifte of the said Susan and Elizabeth, and the same did remise and quite clayme for them and their heires unto the said Richard Lane and William Smithe, and to the heires of the said Richard Lane for ever: And whereas the said Susan Hall and Elizabeth Nash did further, by the same severall ffynes, grant for them and their heires to warrant the said messuages or tenements, lands, and all and singuler other the premisses in the said ffines cõmprised, to the said Richard Lane and William Smith, and to the heires of the said Richard Lane for ever, It is now covenanted, granted, concluded, declared, and fully agreed by and betweene all and every the said parties to theis presents, and the true meaning purpose and intent of all and every of the said parties and of theis presents now is, and at the tyme of the levyinge of the said severall ffines as aforesaid was, that both the said severall ffines soe levyed in manner and forme as aforesaid, or in any other manner and forme, should be and shalbe deemed, accepted, reputed, adjudged and taken to bee, and the cognisee or cognisees in the said ffines named and their heires should and shall immediately, from and after the levyinge and ingrossinge of the said ffines, stand and bee seised of and in the said messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments in the said ffines comprised or meant or intended to bee comprised, to the only use and behoofe of the said Richard Lane and William Smith, their heires and assignes for ever, and to none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever, to the end, intent, and purpose, that the said Richard Lane and William Smith might and may be perfect tenants of the ffreehold and inheritance of all and singuler the said messuages, lands, tenements, and premisses, against whome one or more common recoverye or recoveries might or may be had and suffered, of all and singuler the said premisses, according to the usuall forme of common recoveryes in such case used and accustomed; And for that purpose it is further covenanted, granted, concluded and fully agreed, by and betweene the said parties to theis presents, that the said William Hathway and Thomas Hathway, or one of them, shall and will, before the end of the terme of St. Michaell next ensuing the date of theis presents, pursue and prosecute one or more writt or writts of *entre sur diseisin in le post* against the said Richard Lane and William Smith, to which writt or writts of *entre sur diseisin* the said Richard Lane and William Smith shall appeare and vouch to warrantie the said Susan Hall and Elizabeth Nash, who shall enter into the said warrantie, and shall vouch over the common vouchee, to the end and intent that one or more perfect recoverie or recoveries may be had and executed of the said messuages, lands, tenements and all and singuler other the premisses in the said severall ffine or ffines comprised, according to the usuall manner and forme of common recoveries in such cases used and accustomed; And it is further covenanted, granted, declared, concluded and agreed, by and betweene the said parties to theis presents, that the said recoverie or recoveries soe to be had, suffered and

executed of the said messuages, and of all and singuler other the premisses in the said recoverie or recoveries to be comprised, and the full force and execucion of the same shalbe and enure, and shalbe adjudged, accepted, reputed and taken to be and enure; and the said recoveror or recoverors, and his and their heires, immediately from and after the said recoverie or recoveries soe had, suffered, and executed, shall stand and be seised of and in all and singuler the said messuages, lands, and premisses, in the said recoverie or recoveries to be comprised, and of every parte and parcell of them and every of them, to the severall uses, intents, and purposes hereafter mencioned, That is to say, to the onlie use and behoofe of the said Susan Hall for and duringe the terme of her naturall life, and after her decease, to the use and behoofe of the said Elizabeth Nash, and the heires of her body lawfully begotten or to be begotten, and, for default of such issue, to the use and behoofe of the right heires of the said Elizabeth Nash for ever: In witnesse whereof to the one parte of theis indentures remayning with the said Susan Hall and Elizabeth Nash, they the said Richard Lane and William Smith, William Hathway and Thomas Hathway, have sett their hands and seales; and to another parte thereof, remayning with the said Richard Lane and William Smith, they the said Susan Hall, Elizabeth Nash, William Hathway, and Thomas Hathway have sett their hands and seales; and to the other parte thereof remayning with the said William Hathway and Thomas Hathway, they, the said Susan Hall, Elizabeth Nash, Richard Lane, and William Smith have sett their hands and seales, the day and yeare first above written.

V.—*Settlement of the same Property*, 1652.

This indenture made the twentyeth day of October, in the yeare of our Lord, according to the accompt in England, one thowsand, six hundred, fifty two; Betweene John Barnard, of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, esquier, and Elizabeth his wife, on thone parte; Henry Smyth, of Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, gent. and William ffetherston, of the same towne and county, yeoman, on thother parte, Witnesseth, that it is covenanted, concluded, and agreed by and betweene all the said partyes, and it is theire true intent and meaneing, that the said John Barnard and Elizabeth his wife, shall and will acknowledge and levy, in due forme of lawe, one ffine or ffines, sur conuzance de droit come ceo, que ils ount de lour done, before the Justices of the Court of Comon Plees at Westminster at or before thend of Hillary terme next ensueing, unto the said Henry Smyth and William ffetherstone, and the heires of one of them, with proclamacions according the statute, of all that capitall messuage or tenement with thappurtenaunces scituate and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, in the said county of Warwick, comonly called or knowne by the name of the New Place, now in the tenure of the said John Barnard, and all that fower yard

land and a halfe of arrable, meadow, and pasture, with the appurtenaunces, lying and being in the townes, hamletts, villages, feilds, and grounds of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe, in the said county of Warwick, heretofore the inheritance of William Shakespeare, gent. grandfather of the said Elizabeth, wife of the said John Barnard, by the name of one messuage, one garden, one orchard, one hundred and seaven acres of land, twenty acres of pasture, and comon of pasture for all manner of cattle, with thappurtenances, in Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton and Welcombe, or by such other name or names, quantitie and number of acres, or other certeintie, as shall be devised. Which ffine, soe to be had and levyed, and the full force and execucion thereof, and the cognisees in the said ffine, and theire heires, shal be had, taken, and construed to be, and enure, to the only uses, intents, and purposes herein expressed and declared; that is to say, to the use of the said John Barnard and Elizabeth his wife, for and dureing theire naturall lives, and the life of the longest liver of them, and to the heires of the body of the said Elizabeth, lawfully begotten, or to be begotten, and for defaulte of such issue, to the use of such person or persons, and for such estate and estates, as the said Elizabeth, by any writeing, either purporteing her last will, or otherwise, sealed and subscribed in the presence of two or more credible witnesses, shall lymitt and appoint: and from and after such nominacion or appointment, or in defaulte of such nominacion or appointment, to the use and behoofe of the right heires of the survivor of them, the said John and Elizabeth, for ever. In witnes whereof the partyes above named have, to theis present indentures, interchaungeably put their hands and seales, the day and yeare above written.

Henry Smith. Willm. ffeatherston.

Sealed and delivered in the presence of

Phillip Scarlett.

Edw. Owen.

VI.—*Directions for the Sale of the Property*, 1653.*

To all to whom theise presents shall come. Whearas I, Elizabeth Barnard, wife of John Barnard, esquier, have power to limitt, appoynte, and dispose of all that messuage with the appurtenances in Stratford-upon-Avon, within the

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* This curious deed is signed and sealed by Lady Barnard; the arms upon which are now remarkably perfect, and correspond exactly with those upon her father, Dr. Hall's, gravestone, in the chancel, viz. *Three talbots' heads erased, for* HALL, impaling SHAKSPEARE. It may be presumed Dr. Hall had his seal engraved upon, or soon after, his marriage.—*Wheler.*

county of Warwicke, comonly called the New Place, and of all that foure yard land and a halfe, arrable, meadow, and pasture, in Stratford, Welcombe, and Bishopton, which weare sometimes the inheritance of William Shackspeare, gent. my grandfather, by any wrighting, either purporting my last will, or otherwise, sealed and subscribed in the presence of credible witnesses, to any person or persons, and for any estate or estates, to take effecte in possession, after the death of the said John Barnard, and mee, the said Elizabeth, in case I die without heires of my bodie, as by one indenture, mad at or aboute the 20th day of October 1652, and a ffine therupon acknowledged, may more fully appeare. Now know yee, that I, the said Elizabeth, accordinge to the said power, doe by this wrighting, sealed and subscribed in the presence of credible witnesses, limitt, give, and dispose the said messuage, fower yard land and a halfe, after the decease of the said John Barnard, and mee, the said Elizabeth, without heires of my bodie, ffor and unto Henry Smith, of Stratford aforesaid, gent. and Job Dighton, of the Middle Temple, London, esquier, and their heires, To have and to hold the said messuage, and ffoure yard land and a halfe, unto the said Henry Smith and Job Dighton, their heires and assignes for ever. Nevertheless upon trust and confidence, that the said Henry Smith and Job Dighton, and the survivor of them, and the heires of the survivor of them, shall bargayne and sell the said messuage, ffower yard land and a halfe, to any person or persons, for the best value they can gett: and the moneys therby to be raysed shall imploy, dispose, and distribute of, to such person or persons, and in such manner, and by such some or somes, as I, the said Elizabeth, shall by any wrighting, or noate under my hand, truly testified, declare and nominate. In witnesse whereof, I, the said Elizabeth, have the eaytteneth day of Aprill, 1653, subscribed my name, and sett to my seale.

ELIZA BARNARD.

Seled and subscribed in the presence of

Rich. Lane.
Mary Lane.
Phillip Scarlett.
Elizobeth E. Writon,
hir marke.

VII.—*Lady Barnard's Will*, 1669.

In the name of God, Amen. I Dame Elizabeth Barnard, wife of Sir John Barnard of Abington in the county of Northampton, knight, being in perfect memory, (blessed be God!) and mindful of mortality, do make this my last will and testament in manner and form following. Whereas by my certain deed or writing under my hand and seal dated on or about the 18th day of April, 1653, according to a power therein mentioned, I the said Elizabeth have limited and disposed of all that my messuage with the appurtenances in Stratford-upon-Avon,

in the county of Warwick, called the New-place, and all that four-yard land and an half in Stratford, Welcombe, and Bishopton in the county of Warwick, (after the decease of the said Sir John Barnard, and me the said Elizabeth) unto Henry Smith of Stratford aforesaid, gent. and Job Dighton, of the Middle Temple, London, esq. since deceased, and their heirs, upon trust that they, and the survivor, and the heirs of such survivor, should bargain and sell the same for the best value they can get, and the money thereby to be raised to be employed and disposed of to such person and persons, and in such manner as I the said Elizabeth should by any writing or note under my hand, truly testified, declare and nominate, as thereby may more fully appear. Now my will is, and I do hereby signify and declare my mind and meaning to be, that the said Henry Smith, my surviving trustee, or his heirs, shall with all convenient speed after the decease of the said Sir John Barnard my husband, make sale of the inheritance of all and singular the premises, and that my loving cousin Edward Nash, esq. shall have the first offer or refusal thereof, according to my promise formerly made to him: and the monies to be raised by such sale I do give, dispose of, and appoint the same to be paid and distributed, as is herein after expressed, that is to say, to my cousin Thomas Welles of Carleton in the county of Bedford, gent. the sum of fifty pounds, to be paid him within one year next after such sale: and if the said Thomas Wells shall happen to die before such time as his said legacy shall become due to him, then my desire is, that my kinsman Edward Bagley, citizen of London, shall have the sole benefit thereof. Item, I do give and appoint unto Judith Hathaway, one of the daughters of my kinsman Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford aforesaid, the annual sum of five pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto her yearly and every year, from and after the decease of the said survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, for and during the natural life of her the said Judith, at the two most usual feasts or days of payment in the year, videlicet, the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Michael the Archangel, by equal portions, the first payment thereof to begin at such of the said feasts as shall next happen after the decease of the survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, if the said premises can be so soon sold; or otherwise so soon as the same can be sold: and if the said Judith shall happen to marry, and shall be minded to release the said annual sum of five pounds, and shall accordingly release and quit all her interest and right in and to the same after it shall become due to her, then and in such case, I do give and appoint to her the sum of forty pounds in lieu thereof, to be paid unto her at the time of the executing of such release as aforesaid. Item, I give and appoint unto Joan the wife of Edward Kent, and one other of the daughters of the said Thomas Hathaway, the sum of fifty pounds, to be likewise paid unto her within one year next after the decease of the survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, if the said premises can be so soon sold, or otherwise so soon as the same can be sold; and if the said Joan shall happen to die before the said fifty pounds shall be paid to her, then I do give and appoint the same unto Edward Kent the younger, her son, to be paid unto him when he

shall attain the age of one-and-twenty years. Item, I do also give and appoint unto him the said Edward Kent, son of the said John, the sum of thirty pounds, towards putting him out as an apprentice, and to be paid and disposed of to that use when he shall be fit for it. Item, I do give or appoint and dispose of unto Rose, Elizabeth, and Susanna, three other of the daughters of my said kinsman Thomas Hathaway, the sum of forty pounds a-piece, to be paid unto every of them at such time and in such manner as the said fifty pounds before appointed to the said Joan Kent, their sister, shall become payable. Item, all the rest of the monies that shall be raised by such sale as aforesaid, I give and dispose of unto my said kinsman Edward Bagley, except five pounds only, which I give and appoint to my said trustee Henry Smith for his pains; and if the said Edward Nash shall refuse the purchase of the said messuage and four-yard land and a half with the appurtenances, then my will and desire is, that the said Henry Smith or his heirs shall sell the inheritance of the said premises and every part thereof unto the said Edward Bagley, and that he shall purchase the same; upon this condition, nevertheless, that he the said Edward Bagley, his heirs, executors, or administrators, shall justly and faithfully perform my will and true meaning, in making due payment of all the several sums of money or legacies before mentioned, in such manner as aforesaid. And I do hereby declare my will and meaning to be that the executors or administrators of my said husband Sir John Barnard shall have and enjoy the use and benefit of my said house in Stratford, called the New-Place, with the orchards, gardens, and all other the appurtenances thereto belonging, for and during the space of six months next after the decease of him the said Sir John Barnard. Item, I give and devise unto my kinsman, Thomas Hart, the son of Thomas Hart, late of Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, all that my other messuage or inn situate in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, commonly called the Maidenhead, with the appurtenances, and the next house thereunto adjoining, with the barn belonging to the same, now or late in the occupation of Michael Johnson or his assigns, with all and singular the appurtenances, to hold to him the said Thomas Hart the son, and the heirs of his body; and for default of such issue, I give and devise the same to George Hart, brother of the said Thomas Hart, and to the heirs of his body; and for default of such issue, to the right heirs of me the said Elizabeth Barnard for ever. Item, I do make, ordain, and appoint my said loving kinsman Edward Bagley sole executor of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills; desiring him to see a just performance hereof, according to my true intent and meaning. In witness whereof I the said Elizabeth Barnard have hereunto set my hand and seal, the nine-and-twentieth day of January, Anno Domini one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine.

Elizabeth Barnard.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared to be the last will and testament of the said Elizabeth Barnard, in the presence of

John Howes, Rector de Abington.
Francis Wickes.

VIII. *Indenture relating to Lady Barnard's Property.*

This Indenture, made the eighteenth day of May, Anno Dni. one thowsand, six hundred, seaventy five, and in the seaven and twentyeth yeare of the raigne of our Soveraigne Lord, Charles the Second, by the Grace of God, of England, Scotland, ffrance, and Ireland, King, Defendor of the Faith, &c.; betweene Henry Smith, of Old Stratford, in the county of Warr. gent. and Edward Bagley, citizen and pewterer, of London, of the one part, and Sir Edward Walker, of Whitehall, in the county of Middlesex, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, of the other part. Whereas John Barnard, of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warr. esqr., and Elizabeth his wife, grandchilde and heire of William Shakespeare, gent., by their indenture, duely executed, bearinge date the twentyeth day of October, in the yeare of our Lord God one thowsand, six hundred, fifty two, and made betweene them, the said John Barnard and Elizabeth, on the one part, and Henry Smith, party to theis presents, and William ffetherston, of Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, yeoman, on the other part, and fine therupon levyed, did setle and assure all that capitall messuage or tenement with appurtenances, scituate in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, comonly called the New Place, and all that four yard land and a halfe of arrable, meadow, and pasture, with appurtenances, lying and being in the townes, hamlets, and feilds of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe, in the said county of Warr. formerly the inheritance of the said William Shakespeare, to the use of the said John Barnard, and the said Elizabeth his wife, for and duringe their naturall lives, and the life of the longer liver of them, and to the heires of the body of the said Elizabeth, lawfully begotten or to bee begotten, and for default of such issue, to the use of such person or persons, and for such estate and estates, as the said Elizabeth by any writeing, purporting her last will, or otherwise, sealed and subscribed in the presence of two or more credible witnesses, should limit and appoynt. And wheras afterwards, shee the said Elizabeth Barnard, by her writeing under her hand and seale, bearinge date the eighteenth day of Aprill, in the yeare of our Lord God one thowsand, six hundred, fifty three, and duely executed in the presence of Richard Lane, Mary Lane, Phillip Scarlet, and Elizabeth Writon, credible witnesses, in pursuance of the said power to her reserved, did therby give and dispose the said messuage, foure yard land and a halfe, after the decease of the said John Barnard, and her, the said Elizabeth, without heires of her body, unto Henry Smith, party to theis presents, and Job Dighton, of the Midle Temple, London, esqr., and their heires, to hold to them, their heires and assignes for ever, upon trust that they, and the survivor of them, should bargaine and sell the said messuage, foure yard land and a halfe, to any person or persons, for the best value they could get; and the moneys therby to bee raysed should imploy, dispose, and distribute to such person or persons, and in such maner, and by such sume or sumes, as the said Elizabeth should, by any writinge or note under her hand truely testifyed, de-

clare and nominate. And whereas shee, the said Elizabeth Barnard, afterwards made her last will in writeing, bearinge date the nine and twentyeth day of January, in the yeare of our Lord God, one thowsand, six hundred, sixty nine, and therby, (among other things therin conteyned,) accordinge to her power formerly reserved to her, did will, signify, and declare her mind and meaninge to bee that the said Henry Smith, party to theis presents, or his heires, shuld, with all convenient speed, after the decease of the said John Barnard, then Sir John Barnard, her husband, make sale of the inheritance of all that the aforesaid messuage, called the New Place, and of all that the aforesaid foure yard land and a halfe, in Stratford, Welcombe, and Bishopton, in the county of Warr. with appurtenances; and soone after, shee, the said Elizabeth Barnard, departed this life. And wheras the said Sir John Barnard, knt. is also since dead, and the said Job Dighton severall yeares since departed this life, and hee, the said Henry Smith, party to theis presents, him hath survived: Now this indenture witnesseth that the said Henry Smith, in pursuance of the said power to him given, and by and with the consent and good likeing of the said Edward Bagley, signifyed by his being made party to theis presents, and sealinge and executinge therof, and for and in consideracion of the sume of one thowsand and sixty pounds of lawfull money of England, to him, the said Henry Smith, by the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, truely in hand paid, the receipt hereof they, the said Henry Smith and Edward Bagley, do hereby acknowledge, and thereof, and of evry parte therof, acquit and dischardge the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires, exrs. admrs. and assignes, and evry of them, by theis presents, and for divers other good causes and valuable consideracions him, the said Henry Smith, hereunto espeacially moveinge, hath graunted, bargained, sold, enfeoffed and confirmed, and, by theis presents, doth graunt, bargaine, sell, enfeoffe, and confirme unto the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, all that the aforesaid capitall messuage or tenement, with appurtenances, scituate and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, comonly called or knowne by the name of the New Place, scituate in part in a street there called Chappell-street, and in part in a lane there called Chappell-lane, and all gardens, orchards, backsides, courts, yards, outlets, backsides, barnes, stables, outhowses, buildings, walls, mounds, and fences to the same belonging, or in any wise of right apperteyning or therwithall formerly comonly used or enjoyed, or reputed as parcell or member therof, or belonging therunto: and all that foure yard land and a halfe of arrable, meadow, and pasture, with appurtenances, scituate, lyinge, and beinge in the townes, hamlets, villages, feilds, and precincts of Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, Old Stratford, Bishopton, and Welcombe, in the said county of Warr. or in some or one of them, and all lands, tenements, meadowes, feedings, pastures, commons, common of pasture, wayes, passages, wast grounds, hades, meeres, furrowes, woods, underwoods, trees, profits, comodityes, emoluments, and hereditaments whatsoever, with their and evry of their appurtenances to the said premisses or any part of them belonging, or in anywise of right apperteyning, and the revercion and revercions, remaynder and remaynders, rents, and services of the

said premisses, and all thestate, right, title, interest, use, trust, clayme, and demaund whatsoever, of him, the said Henry Smith, of, in, to, or out of the same, and all deeds, charters, evidences, writings, records, escripts, and minuments, only touchinge the premisses, togeather with true coppyes of all other writeings and evidences, that with the said premisses concerne other lands and tenements, To have and to hould the said capitall messuage, barnes, stables, outhowses, foure yard land and a halfe, and all other the above graunted or mencioned, or intended to bee graunted premisses, with their and every of their appurtenances, unto the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, for ever, to the only use and behoofe of him, the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, for ever. And the said Henry Smith, for him and his heires, the said capitall messuage, foure yard land and a halfe, and other the above graunted or mencioned, or intended to bee graunted premisses, with appurtenances, unto the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, to the uses aforesaid, against him, the said Henry Smith, his heires and assignes, shall and will warrant, and for ever defend, by theis presents. And the said Henry Smith, for himselfe, his heires, exrs. and admrs. and for every of them, doth covenant and graunt to and with the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, and to and with every of them, by theis presents, in manner followinge, that is to say, that hee, the said Henry Smith, his heires or assignes, hath not made, donne, or suffered, nor shall nor will hereafter make, doe, or suffer any act, matter, or thinge, whereby the said messuage, lands, and premisses, or any part thereof, or thestate hereby graunted, are, may, or shall bee any wise incumbred, chardged, impeached, or avoyded, in any sort whatsoever, either in law or equity: and that the said premisses shall and may peaceably and quietly bee held and enjoyed, accordinge to thestate thereof hereby graunted, without the lawfull let, trouble, disturbance, or eviccion of him, the said Henry Smith, his heires or assignes, or any other person or persons lawfully clayming any thing in the premisses, by, from, or under him, or them, or any of them; and further, that hee, the said Henry Smith, his heires and assignes, shall and will, at all times hereafter, within the space of seaven yeares, at the costs and chardges in the law of the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires or assignes, make, doe, and execute, or cause to be made, donne, and executed all and every further and other lawfull and reasonable act, thinge, devise, and assurance in the law, of the premisses, unto the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires or assignes, so as such further assurance conteyne no further or other warranty then as aforesaid, and so as hee or they bee not hereby compelled to travayle from his or their then dwellinge, for the docing or executinge thereof: all which said assurance or assurances, and more especially one fine *sur conusans de droit come ceo, &c. q'il ad de lour done,* to bee levyed of the premisses by the said Henry Smith, and Edward Bagley, before the end of Michaelmas terme next, unto the said Sir Edward Walker, his heires or assignes, shall, and is hereby declared to bee and enure to the only use of the said Sir

Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, for ever, and to or for none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever. And the said Edward Bagley, for himselfe, his heires, exers. admrs. and assignes, and for every of them, doth, by these presents, covenant and graunt to and with the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, in manner followinge; that is to say, that hee, the said Henry Smith, now hath, and at the execucion of theis presents, shall have full power, good right, and lawfull authority to graunt and assure the said messuage, lands and premisses in manner and forme as aforesaid; and that the said messuage, lands, and premisses now are, and soe shall for ever hereafter continue, and be free and cleere, and freely and cleerly acquitted, exonerated, and dischardged, or otherwise well and sufficiently saved harmlesse, and kept indempnified unto the said Sir Edward Walker, his heires and assignes, of and from all and all manner of former and other guifts, graunts, bargaines, sales, leases, estates, rents, arrerages of all manner of rents, statutes, recognizances, judgements, execucions, willes, entayles, legacyes, limitacion of use or uses, and of and from all other titles, troubles, chardges, demaunds, and incumbrances whatsoever, had, made, committed, donne, or suffred by the said Henry Smith, Edward Bagley, the said Sir John Barnard, and Dame Elizabeth Barnard, Thomas Nash her former husband, Susan Hall her mother, or any or either of them, their or either of their heires, exers. admrs. or assignes, or any other person or persons whatsoever, any thing in the premisses lawfully havinge or clayminge, or which shall or may hereafter lawfully clayme or have, by, from, or under them, or any or either of them. And that hee, the said Edward Bagley, Margaret his wife, Henry Smith, and their heires, and the heires or assignes of the said Sir John Barnard, dame Elizabeth his wife, Thomas Nash, and Susan Hall, shall and will, at all times hereafter, within the space of seaven yeares next, at and upon the resonable request, and at the costs and chardges in the law of the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires or assignes, make, doe, acknowledge, execute, and suffer, or cause to bee made, donne, acknowledged, executed, and suffred, all and every such further and reasonable act and acts, thinge, device, and devises, assurance and assurances in the law whatsoever, for the further, better, and more perfect assuringe, and sure makeinge, setling, and conveyinge of the said messuage, foure yard land and a halfe, and all other the above graunted, or intended to bee graunted premisses, and of every part thereof, with the appurtenaunces, unto the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, for ever, bee it or they, by ffine or ffines, recovery or recoveryes, with single or more voucher or vouchers over, feoffment, deed, or deeds, enrolled or not enrolled, the enrolement of theis presents, or by any other wayes or meanes whatsoever, as by the said Sir Edward Walker, Garter Principall King at Armes, his heires and assignes, or by any of them, shall bee reasonably devised, or advised, and required, soe as such party or partyes to make such further assurance, bee not hereby compelled or compellable to travayle above the space of tenne miles from his or their then abode, for the doeinge, or execuceinge thereof, and soe as the same conteyne

noe further or other covenant, or warranty of the premisses, then only against him or them, and their heires: all which said assurance, or assurances of the premisses, is and shall bee, and are by theis presents declared and agreed, by all the partyes hereunto, to bee and enure to the only use and behoofe of the said Sir Edward Walker, knt. Garter Principall King at Armes, and of his heires and assignes, for ever, and to or for none other use, intent, or purpose whatsoever. In wittnes whereof the said partyes first above named to theis present indentures interchangeably have put to their hands and seales, the day and yeare first above written.

Henry Smith. Edward Bagley.

Sealed and delivered by the within named Henry Smith, in the presence of

John Clopton. Richard Smithe.
Tho. Rawlins. James Badger.
Wm. Gibson.

Sealed and delivered by the within named Edward Bagley, in the presence of

Charles Lee. Wm. Gibson.
Tho. Rawlins James Badger.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

P. 5. Shakespeares are mentioned in the registers of Old Swinford. In the church of Little Packington there is a tablet to the memory of a Shakespeare. In fact, the name is found in nearly every part of Warwickshire, and scattered over the adjoining counties.

P. 20. The erroneous date here corrected has been previously detected by Mr. Hunter. All biographers have been so careless in this respect that I have found it necessary to compare the regnal years in every instance, and the large number of mistakes thus discovered will be apparent to any one who will take the pains of comparing the dates here given with those in former works.

P. 33. The notice in Gildon to which Oldys refers occurs in the edition of Langbaine, 1699, p. 126, "I have been told that he writ the scene of the Ghost in Hamlet at his house which bordered on the charnel-house and church-yard." This looks like a silly invention. Oldys, in one of his MSS., asserts that Shakespeare received but £5 for his Hamlet.

P. 49. Mr. Wheler has, with the most obliging courtesy, furnished me with the following curious extracts from a Subsidy Roll of 9 Eliz. 1567, in the possession of William Staunton, Esq., of Longbridge House, near Warwick. We here find John Shakespeare assessed on goods of the value of £4, and Richard Hathaway, of Shottery, on goods of the same amount.

Stratford Burgh.	Adryan Quyney in bonis	viij.*l.*—vj.*s.* viij.*d.*
	John Shakespere in bonis	iiij.*l.*—iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
Rowington.	John Shakespere in terris	xx.*s.*—xvj.*d.*
	Thomas Shakespere in bonis	iij.*l.*—ij.*s.* vj.*d.*
Shottery, Bishopton, & Welcome.	Richard Hatheway in bonis	iiij.*l.*—iij.*s.* iiij.*d.*
	John Combes gent. in bonis	viij.*l.*—vj.*s.* viij.*d.*

P. 75. I have seen a long and curious statement of the complaints made against Dethick for granting arms improperly, but Shakespeare's grant is not mentioned. "He committed very many and grosse abuses, as namely the giveing of armes, yea and of some of the nobilitie, to base and ignoble persons, as Yorcke Heraulde hath at large sett downe in a booke delivered to the King's majesty. He falsefyed pedegrees alsoe, as that of Harbourne being of xij. descents, wherein hee made vj. knights, which God nor man never knewe; nor the name himselfe, when hee was called before the deputy commissioners, could justify no further then his grandfather, who was reputed to be an honest man, but of meane fortune."—*Ashmolean MSS.* It is quite apparent from this that statements in Dethick's grants are not historical evidence of any worth.

P. 78. The following version of this statement, relating to the arms of Shakespeare, is in a contemporary MS. in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford:

"The answeres of Garter and Clarencieux Kings of Arms to the Scrowle of Arms exhibited by Raffe Brokesmouth caled York Herauld.

"*Shakespere.* It maye as well be said that Harley, who bearethe Gould a bend 2 cottizes sable or Ferrers &c., or any other that beare silver or gould a bend chargd in like manner, usurpe the coate of the Lo. Mauley. As for the speare on the bend is a patible difference, and the man was a magistrat in Stratford upon Avon, a justice of peace. He maryed the daughter and heyre of Ardern, and was of good substance and habelité."

It is but fair to state that I am indebted for my knowledge of this to the recently published Catalogue of the Ashmolean Manuscripts by W. H. Black, 4to., a work which unquestionably exceeds in merit every compilation of the kind hitherto completed, and is distinguished by such extraordinary research, learning, and knowledge, that it will ever remain an enduring monument of its author's talent and industry. It is to be hoped every future catalogue-maker will attempt something in imitation of this. Good catalogues of MSS. are of the greatest literary importance.

P. 99. *Mouster* by an error in two instances should be *monster*, a muster, from the Fr.

P. 112. It has been conjectured by Malone that Anne Hathaway came from Luddington, a village near Stratford and Shottery, and it is by no means impossible that the marriage took place in that village. The church is gone, and the register was unfortunately destroyed by fire some years ago.

P. 123. The date of the death of Davies has hitherto been incorrectly given. He was buried at Sapperton on June 19th, 1708, having been inducted into that living on March 5th, 1695. Fulman was buried at Meysey Hampton on June 29th, 1688, his wife Hesther having died in April, 1686, and his son Thomas Mainwaring in January, 1683.

"Our poet was the son of Mr. John Shakespeare, woolstapler. Was the eldest of ten children, born April 23, 1563. Was brought up in his youth to his father's business; married, very young, the daughter of one Hathaway, a substantial yeoman in his own neighbourhood. 'Tis a tradition, descended from old Betterton, that he was concerned with a parcel of deer-stealers in robbing Sir Tho. Lucy's park at Charlecot, which drove him to London among the players. The Queen had his plays often acted before her, and shewed him some gracious marks of favour, and King James gave him and others a patent for a company in 1603. See it in Rymers Fœdera. Thomas [Henry] Wriothesley E. of Southampton gave him £1000 to complete a purchase.'—*Oldys MSS.*

P. 138. The original prologue to Circe was written by Dryden, and is printed under his name in 1677, and in all the subsequent editions of that play; but the lines mentioning *Pericles* only occur in a corrected prologue, published separately. Sir W. Scott erroneously attributes the earlier version to Charles Davenant.

P. 142. We learn from Heywood that Shakespeare was familiarly termed *Will* by his friends, not *Willy*. "Willes newe playe" is thus mentioned in a MS. found by Mr. Collier at Dulwich College, here collated with the original:—

"Sweete Nedde, nowe wynne an other wager
ffor thine olde frende and fellow stager!
Tarlton himselfe thou doest excell,
And Bentley beate, and conquer Knell,
And nowe shall Kempe orecome as well.
The moneyes downe, the place the Hope,
Phillippes shall hide his head, and Pope.
ffeare not, the victorie is thine!
Thou still as mächeles Ned shall shine!
If Roscius Richard foames and fumes,
The Globe shall have but emptie roomes,
If thou doest act; and Willes newe playe
Shall be rehearst some other daye.
Consent then, Nedde, doe us this grace!
Thou cannot faile in anie case,
ffor in the triall, come what maye,
All sides shall brave Ned Allin saye!"

P. 148. It has generally been supposed that Charles Hart, the actor, was descended from Shakespeare, but such is not the fact. He died in 1683, and was buried at Stanmore, "Aug. the 20th, 1683, Mr. Charles Hart was here interred according to the act for burying in woolin." His will is in the Prerogative Office.

P. 154. "Old Mr. Bowman the player reported from Sir William Bishop that some part of Sir John Falstaff's character was drawn from a townsman of Stratford, who either faithlessly broke a contract, or spitefully refused to part with some land for a valuable consideration adjoining to Shakspeare's in or near that town."—*Oldys MSS.*

P. 162. The following curious order, dated Jan. 21st, 1618-9, alludes to the complaint made against the Blackfriars Theatre in 1596. It is preserved in the archives of the city of London.

"Item, this day was exhibited to this Court a peticion by the constables and other officers and inhabitantes within the precinct of Blackfryers, London, therein declaring that in November, 1596, divers honorable persons and others, then inhabiting in the said precinct, made knowne to the Lordes and others of the Privy Councell what inconveniences were likely to fall upon them by a common playhowse then preparing to be erected there, and that their honors then forbad the use of the said howse for playes, and in June, 1600, made certaine orders by which, for many weightie reasons therein expressed, it is limitted there should be only two playhowses tolerated, whereof the one to be on the Banckside, and the other in or neare Golding Lane, exempting thereby the Blackfryers; and that a lettre was then directed from their Lordships to the Lord Maior and Justices, strictly requiringe of them to see those orders putt in execucion, and so to be continued: And nowe, forasmuch as the said inhabitantes of the Blackfryers have in their said peticion complayned to this court, that, contrarie to the said Lordes orders, the owner of the said playehowse within the Blackfryers, under the name of a private howse, hath converted the same to a publique playhowse, unto which there is daily so great resort of people, and soe great multitudes of coaches, whereof many are hackney coaches, bringing people of all sortes, that sometimes all their streetes cannot conteyne them, that they endanger one the other, breake downe stalles, throw downe mens goodes from their shopps, hinder the passage of the inhabitantes there to and from their howses, lett the bringing in of their necessary provisions, that the

tradesmen and shoppkeepers cannot utter their wares, nor the passengers goe to the common water staires without danger of their lives and lyms, whereby manye times quarrells and effusion of blood hath followed, and the minister and people disturbed at the administracion of the Sacrament of baptisme, and publique prayers in the afteernoones; whereupon, and after reading the said order and lettre of the Lordes shewed forth in this court by the foresaid inhabitantes, and consideracion thereof taken, this court doth thinke fitt and soe order that the said playhowse be suppressed, and that the players shall from henceforth forbeare and desist from playing in that howse, in respect of the manifold abuses and disorders complayned of as aforesaid."

P. 165. In the plan, B. is a house adjoining New Place belonging to the Corporation; C. house in which Julius Shawe formerly lived; D. two freehold messuages; E. a freehold messuage and garden.

P. 209. It has been stated that Shakespeare was in London in October, 1603, on the strength of a letter printed in Mr. Collier's Memoirs of Alleyn, p. 63, but having carefully examined the original, I am convinced it has been misread. The following is now all that remains of a postscript to the letter from Mrs. Allen to her husband, dated October 20th, 1603. The portion of this before the words *and inquire* is at the bottom of the first page, which is much torn, so that a few words only can be traced, but these are quite sufficient to show that Mr. Collier's interpretation cannot be correct.

"Aboute a weeke agoe ther . . . . e a youthe who said he was Mr. Frauncis Chalo . . . . . s man . . . . . ld have borrow.d x . . to have bought things for . . . . . s Mr . . . . . t hym cominge without . . . . . token . . . . . d
I would have . . . . . .
I bene sur . . . . . .
and inquire after the fellow, and said he had lent hym a horse. I feare me he gulled hym, thoughe he gulled not us. The youthe was a prety youthe, and hansom in appayrell: we know not what became of hym. Mr. Bromffeild commendes hym; he was heare yesterdaye. Nicke and Jeames be well, and commend them: so dothe Mr. Cooke and his weife in the kyndest sorte, and so once more in the hartiest manner farwell.

Your faithfull and lovinge weife,

JOANE ALLEYNE."

P. 218. The following is a copy of the letter at Dulwich College here alluded to:

"After our hartie . . . . . to your Lo. Wheras the Kings Majesties plaiers have given . . . . . highnes good service in ther quallitie of playinge, and for as moch lickewise as they are at all times to be emploed in that service, whensoever they shalbe comaunded, We thinke it therfore fitt, the time of Lent being now past, that your L. doe permitt and suffer the three companies of plaiers to the King, Queene, and Prince, publicklie to exercise ther plaies in their severall usuall howses for that purpose, and noe other, vz. the Globe scituate in Maiden Lane on the Banckside in the countie of Surrey, the Fortun in Goldinge Lane, and the Curtaine in Hollywelle, in the cowntie of Midlesex, without any lett or interrupption in respect of any former lettres of prohibition heertofore written by us to your Lop. except ther shall happen weeklie to die of the plague above the number of thirtie within the cittie of London and the libertics therof, att which time wee thinke itt fitt they shall cease and forbeare any further publicklie to playe untill the sicknes be again decreaced to the saide

number. And so we bid your Lo. hartilie farewell. ffrom the court at Whitehalle, the ix.th of Aprille, 1604.

Your very loving ffrends,

To our verie good L. the Lord Maior of the cittie of London, and to the Justices of the Peace of the counties of Midlesex and Surrey.

Nottingham.
Suffock.
Gill Shrowsberie.
Ed. Worster.
W. Knowles.
J. Stanhopp."

On this document the following memorandum is written in another hand, perhaps by Allen:

Ks. Comp.
Burbidge.
Shakspere.
ffletcher.
Phillips.
Condle.
Hemminges.
Armyn.
Slye.
Cowley.
Hostler.
Day.

P. 227. Two copies of the following document are preserved at Dulwich College. The one here used is endorsed, "1609. The estate of the poores booke the 8. of Aprill, ffor the Clinke."

"A breif noat taken out of the poores booke, contayning the names of all thenhabitantes of this Liberty which are rated and assesed to a weekely paim towardes the relief of the poore. As it standes now encreased, this 6° day of Aprill 1609. Delivered up to Phillip Henslowe esquier, churchwarden, by Francis Carter, one of the late Ovreseers of the same Liberty.

Phillip Henslowe esquior assesed at weekely	vj.*d.*
Ed. Alleyn assesed at weekely	vj.*d.*
The Ladye Buckley, weeklye	iiij.*d.*
Mr. Cole	iiij.*d.*
Mr. Lee	iiij.*d.*
Mrs. Cannon	ij.*d.*
Mrs. White	ij.*d.*
Mr. Langwoorthe	ij.*d.*
Mr. Binfeild	ij.*d.*
Mr. Corden	ij.*d.*
Mr. Chauncye	ij.*d.*
Mrs. Sparrowhauke	ij.*d.*
Mr. Mason	ij.*d.*
Mr. Watfoord	ij.*d.*
Mr. Badger	ij.*d.*
Mr. Heynes	ij.*d.*
Mr. Dauson	ij.*d.*
Mr. Hovell	ij.*d.*
Mr. Griffin	ij.*d.*
Mr. Toppin	ij.*d.*
Mr. Cevis	ij.*d.*

Mr. Lyman	ij.*d.*
Mr. Louens	ij.*d.*
Mr. Simpson	ij.*d.*
Mr. Maynard	ij.*d.*
Mr. Burkett	ij.*d.*
ffrancis Carter	ij.*d.*
Mr. Stock for halfe the parke	ij.*d.*
Huighe Robbinson for halfe the parke	ij.*d.*
Mr. Carre	ij.*d.*
Gilbert Catherens	ij.*d.*
Mr. Shakespeare	vj.*d.*
Mr. Edw. Collins	vj.*d.*
John Burrett	vj.*d.*
Roger Johnes	ij.*d.* ob.
Mychaell Elsmoore	ij.*d.* ob.
Mr. Toune	ij.*d.* ob.
Mr. Jubye	j.*d.* ob.
Mr. Mansfeild	j.*d.* ob.
John Dodson	j.*d.* ob.
Richard Smith	j.*d.* ob.
Richard Hunt	j.*d.* ob.
Simon Bird	j.*d.* ob.
Peter Nusam	j.*d.* ob.
Jeames Kiddon	j.*d.* ob.
Tho. Stoakes	j.*d.* ob.
John Facye	j.*d.* ob.
Phillip Philcoks	j.*d.* ob.
Wm. Stevens	j.*d.* ob.
Mr. Godfrey Richards for the long slip of ground	j.*d.* ob.
Mr. Coggen, weekly	j.*d.*
Ferdynando Moses	j.*d.*
Edw. Nevell	j.*d.*
John Bacon	j.*d.*
Mrs. Davison	j.*d.*
Rafe Trott	j.*d.*
John Judkin	j.*d.*"

P. 273. It is worthy of remark that the Halls inhabited New Place after the death of the poet.

Bylles mad to be sealed by moneys to be payd, 3 *Februarii,* 1617.

Mr. Baker, xl.*li.* to Mr. Hall at Newplace.
Mr. Wolner, x.*li.* to me at Mr. Halles at Newplace.

In the Books of Composition for not taking the order of knighthood at the coronation of King Charles I. 1630-2, at the Rolls House, occur the following entries:—

William Combe of Old Stratford, 26 0 0
Johannes Hall de Burgo Stratford super Avon gen. 10 0 0.

P. 278. All the witnesses to the will were neighbours of Shakespeare, and are frequently mentioned in the records of the corporation. Julius Shaw was a near neighbour, and his house, as it now appears, is represented at p. 170.

P. 297. The very curious allusion to Shakespeare in the 'Return from Parnassus,' 1606, proves how highly he was in favour with his contemporaries. Kempe is made to say,—

"Few of the university pen plays well; they smell too much of that writer Ovid, and that writer *Metamorphosis*, and talk too much of Proserpina and Juppiter. Why, here's our fellow Shakespeare puts them all down; ay, and Ben Jonson too. O, that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakespeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit."

P. 298. The following curious anecdote occurs in 'Jocabella, or a Cabinet of Conceits,' 1640, 12mo. "One asked another what Shakespeare's workes were worth, all being bound together: hee answered, not a farthing. Not worth a farthing, said he; why so? He answered that his playes were worth a great deale of money, but he never heard that his workes were worth any thing at all." See Collier's *Farther Particulars*, 1839, p. 7.

P. 298. Shakespeare had many friends. Anthony Scoloker, in his Daiphantus, 4to. 1604, speaks of his "friendly Shakespeare's tragedies." Wood, ii. 155, 576, mentions Thomas Freeman and George Chapman as esteemed and admired by the poet. Augustine Phillips, in his will dated May, 1605, gives "to my fellowe, William Shakespeare, a thirty shillings peece in gould."

P. 298. It may be just worth while to make the following extract from a rare jest-book as evidence of the early period at which Stratford on Avon became celebrated as the birthplace of Shakespeare. "One travelling through Stratford upon Avon, a towne most remarkeable for the birth of famous William Shakespeare, and walking in the church to doe his devotion, espied a thing there worthy observation, which was a tombestone laid more than three hundred yeeres agoe, on which was engraven an epitaph to this purpose, I Thomas such a one, and Elizabeth my wife here under lie buried, and know, reader, I R. C. and I Christoph. Q. are alive at this howre to witnesse it."—*A Banquet of Jests or Change of Cheare*, 12mo. Lond. 1639.

P. 298. The gold seal-ring here delineated was found some years ago in a field near the church at Stratford, and was purchased by Mr. Wheler within a few hours after it was discovered. Singularly enough, a man named William Shakespeare was at work near the spot when it was picked up. Little doubt can be entertained that this ring belonged to the poet, and it is probably the one he lost before his death, and was not to be found when his will was executed, the word *hand* being substituted for *seale* in the original copy of that document. See p. 278. The only other person at Stratford having the same initials, and likely to possess such a seal, was William Smith, but he used one having a different device, as may be seen from several indentures preserved amongst the records of the corporation. In "a vewe of the Wood Street Ward, 1598," a MS. at Stratford, occurs the initials W. S. as paying 2*s.* 6*d.* for certain rents to the Corporation, which entry probably refers to the same person. On the whole, then, I am disposed to confide in the authenticity of this relic, although confessing the evidence amounts to little more than a *reductio ad absurdum*, that, supposing this ring did not belong to Shakespeare, it belonged to no one, at least to no one at Stratford. We cannot well expect positive proof in matters of this kind, and, even if we are mistaken, no discredit is thrown by the error on any portion of our biography. Believing it to have belonged to Shakespeare, it is a most interesting memento of the poet, and one of the possession of which Mr. Wheler may well be proud.

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